



# City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director  
Greg Nickels, Mayor

## MINUTES OF THE SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION January 10, 2002 Approved January 24, 2002

**Commissioners Present:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Gregory Davis; Denise Lathrop; John Owen; Mimi Sheridan; Darryl Smith; Linda Stalzer; Val Thomas

**Commissioners Absent:** Lyn Krizanich, Phil Olbrechts, Paul Tomita

**Staff Present:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman, Susan McLain

**Guests Present:** Teresita Batayola, SPO

### COMMISSION BUSINESS

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the November 29, 2001 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

**Commissioner Recruitment:** The Planning Commission is still waiting word from Mayor Nickels' office about proceeding with recruitment for two new commissioners. Commissioners were asked for their suggestions for possible nominations, keeping in mind the need to maintain a balance of geographic representation and reflection of the city's diverse community.

**Nominating Committee:** Chair Chuck Weinstock announced that Commissioners will receive a call from one of the Nominating Committee members in the next week. Commissioners were asked to consider their interest in serving in a leadership capacity within the Commission. Recommendations will be brought to the next full Commission meeting on January 25.

## **COMMISSION AND PROJECT UPDATES**

**Follow-Up on the Commission's Work in Rainier Beach:** Commissioners Gregory Davis and Darryl Smith and Commission staff will meet with representatives of the New Community School on January 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss potential for the Commission to work with the community.

**Elevated Transportation Company (ETC):** Commissioners Paul Tomita, Mimi Sheridan and Matthew Kitchen participated in the joint working session between the Planning Commission, the Design Commission and the Elevated Transit Company. A second working session is scheduled for January 23<sup>rd</sup>. The intent of these working sessions is to have in-depth discussions with ETC staff and consultants about planning and design parameters, their proposed design guidelines, and the ongoing role for the joint Commission model.

**Northgate—Library Siting:** The Library Board is holding a public meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup> to hear public comment on siting the new Northgate Library. They are expected to select a preferred site at this meeting. Given the Commission's work on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and earlier work on planning issues, staff recommend that the Commission submit a letter and possibly have a Commission representative speak at this meeting. Commissioners agreed with this recommendation and the "Northgate team" who most recently worked on the Northgate 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape Design project will work with staff to craft a letter and present it at the Library Board meeting.

**Neighborhood Planning Program Documentation Report:** Susan McLain announced the completion of the NPP brochure and full report, noting that copies are available for each Commissioner. These documents will be mailed to a fairly broad list of City and community members over the next two weeks. Additional copies may be obtained by contacting Susan at (206) 684-0432.

**Response to Commission Letter to Mayor Nickels:** Marty Curry reported that while the Commission has not received a formal response to its letter to Mayor Nickels, she has heard from newly named SPO Director, MaryJean Ryan. Ms. Ryan stated that she was impressed by the Commission's letter and is interested in discussing concerns and ideas soon. She is particularly interested in getting their input regarding the focus and organization of the City's planning functions. A meeting will be scheduled in the near future. Marty Curry also suggested the Commission meet with Andrew Lofton, the Mayor's Chief of Departmental Operations, to discuss citywide planning issues.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION: 2002 WORK PLAN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock introduced the discussion, stating the goal of identifying key priorities, particularly focusing on key policy areas and issues, and what the Commission's role should be. The following is a compilation of comments from round-robin input from Commissioners.

## **Planning**

- Inform the community of the importance of the planning function.
- Advocate for leadership in planning. Strengthen the Commission's influence. Strengthen the planning department. Work internally with Executive to structure the City's planning function.
- Assert a stronger voice in planning policy and planning organization.
- All policy and planning topics have need for coordinated actions.
- Planning Commission role: Learn about citizen advocacy and departmental advocacy--figure out how to fuse these two roles together. The Commission should be forward looking in these areas.
- Rethink the organization of Seattle Planning Commission. The Commission will have a bigger job in the future.
- Define the planning architecture for the City; tell the story of how we use the Comprehensive Plan. Assess plan implementation relative to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan; relate Housing Levy to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Fit transportation projects into Comprehensive Plan priorities.
- Look for opportunities to influence stronger city-wide focus on planning/planning organization.
- Do we think there are things that should require SPC approval? How would that change things?
- Advocacy; alliance with others to create a stronger role for planning.
- Proactive role--create ideas for planning function; present them for discussion.
- Understand what the Mayor wants to do--offer how to use planning functions to accomplish his objectives.
- Establish a formal role regarding the Comprehensive Plan (beyond the annual amendment process): approval role for major things related to the Comprehensive Plan; constant critic of the Comprehensive Plan; are policies working; are they being met?
- Good planning--people, housing businesses are healthy; kids educated, healthy environment.

## **Neighborhood Planning**

- Facilitate community discussions. Take an active role, but don't manage or carry out the planning work.
- Monitor Neighborhood Plan stewardship.
- Play a facilitative role with neighborhoods; monitor how they are meeting Comprehensive Plan goals.
- Are there significant areas left out? Georgetown, South Park, SoDo. How are these faring; addressing unique issues related to proximity to industrial areas.
- More cross-department look at geographic areas; alignment of expenditures with areas growing. Have these changed? Measurement tool?
- Help design plan implementation assessment.
- Facilitation role, not project management.

- Neighborhood Matching Fund--key to implementing plans; role in assessment if it occurs
- Bring players together--facilitative role.
- Ongoing look at how plans are working; whether City is meeting its obligations.

### **Transportation**

- Advocate for coordination of projects; for refocusing SeaTran. The Commission could sponsor forums on transportation issues.
- Try to influence major projects: public role; advocate for system integration; agency and project coordination.
- Ensure that decisions lead to coordinated system, that results in maximum use by the public.
- Plan integration is central to Commission's focus.
- Want to get drawn into each project. But the real focus for the Commission should be how do these all work together. This coordination is the missing piece.
- Offer insights in refocusing SeaTran--larger structural issues; design issues (coordinate with SDC).
- Role in refocusing SeaTran: actions must work for the city as a whole.
- Use the Commission's ability to work across boundaries; monitor projects/participate where appropriate.
- Refocusing SeaTran is the biggest concern within the community. Make it a priority.
- Advocacy role: keep transportation projects moving.
- Help bring focus to SeaTran regarding how its work is facilitating Comprehensive Plan goals.
- Focus on two things not working well: Street Use Manual; Land Use Code. Both are very prescriptive.

### **Urban Centers**

- Inject our values (Comprehensive Plan?); replication of positive examples in urban centers.
- Voice opinions, for example regarding types of development needed in South Lake Union; transportation strategies.
- Should SoDo be added to this? The working environment is an important part of the city.
- All have constituencies; areawide transportation analysis as a model. Can it be replicated? What is its value as a citywide tool?
- Continue involvement.

### **Comprehensive Plan**

- Vanguard of importance. The Commission should monitor; take proactive role.
- Satisfy our responsibilities.
- Interested in Shoreline Policies--proposed changes and implications.
- Educational function.
- High priority: link City investment to growth areas--understand CIP process.
- Link City investment to Comprehensive Plan goals.

- Articulate the vision; assess whether we are accomplishing Comprehensive Plan goals.
- Learn from others through field trips to other cities.
- Need intermediary step between Comprehensive Plan and implementation projects--implementation strategy with investment tools--strategic planning.
- Comprehensive Plan should be explained more simply and clearly to the public and officials (for example, single family areas are protected; growth is focused in all other areas).
- Translator role; discipline role (holding City/community accountable).

### **Housing and Land Use**

- The Commission should be a voice in making sure Comprehensive Plan affordability goals are being met.
- Not sure how the Commission can be most effective.
- Specific, important role: advocate for Housing Levy renewal. The levy could be large enough to have a positive effect on affordability goals rather than taking the least common denominator approach.
- Tie Housing Levy back to Comprehensive Plan goals.
- Interest in Regional housing event; promote pilot projects and creative tools (Madison area RSL).

### **Discussion**

Marty Curry reinforced Commissioners' interest in participating in discussions about overall planning functions, as well as the role of the Comprehensive Plan, noting that this is a good time to look at how Comprehensive Plan goals and policies are being met and how to link these policies to City decisions and priorities.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen stated that large, comprehensive planning documents are never used without intermediary steps. Overall guidance must be pieced out into small, more easily understood steps. In the case of the Comprehensive Plan, this should include an assessment. He acknowledged that elected leaders want flexibility in adhering to broad range policies, in order to meet more immediate issues.

Commissioner John Owen expressed his support for developing an implementation tool--a users manual--for the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Val Thomas compared this to the role of the Design Review Boards. The Boards apply and interpret broad goals.

Chair Chuck Weinstock articulated his general understanding of the Comprehensive Plan as defining broad land use and growth patterns, and redirection of resources to make the Comprehensive Plan work. He stated that capital investments/projects should serve Comprehensive Plan goals. This is dependent upon good translation of Comprehensive goals and policies, and disciplined enforcement of those goals and policies.

Commissioner Linda Stalzer said the challenge is how to get a big organization like the City to make good planning happen. Commissioner Kitchen said the City needs to begin by translating the Comprehensive Plan for the many decision-makers that don't understand their interests. Commissioner John Owen compared the "intermediate step" from the Comprehensive Plan to City decisions to the Administrative Code for the State of Washington. The Administrative Code explains the RCW and directs local governments in how to act.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop said another challenge is the fact that implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, via neighborhood planning, is conducted by volunteers. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan added that the City can't direct where growth occurs. This is dependent upon market conditions. Susanne Friedman also noted that the Comprehensive Plan also does not provide criteria by which to evaluate decisions within specific areas of the city.

Commissioner George Blomberg asked how the Planning Commission should advance the Comprehensive Plan. Chair Weinstock offered two strategies: requiring a checklist of government initiatives, and developing the City infrastructure to support Comprehensive Plan goals.

Commissioner Stalzer said that "strategic planning" is a good word to describe the intermediate step. Marty Curry explained that much strategic planning takes place in the form of coordinating major projects and noted there are often challenges of connecting these efforts to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Stalzer asked if strategic planning should take place by geographic area or by issue. Commissioner Sheridan noted that each discipline has differing standards, and each discipline (parks, transportation, etc) needs to work together.

Marty Curry said the Commission will have the opportunity to discuss these issues with MaryJean Ryan, director of the City's Strategic Planning Office. She also announced that intern Patricia Julio has assembled information about planning and planning commission functions in four cities, in response to the Executive Committee's request for such information. Commissioners are encouraged to review this information.

Chuck Weinstock closed the meeting, requesting that staff take the input from today's discussion and develop a first-cut at Commission work plan priorities and goals for 2002. This will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and sent to all Commissioners before the next meeting (January 24, 2002).

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

## **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING:**

Thursday, January 24, 2002, 7:30 - 9:00 a.m., Municipal Building, Room 221, Boards and Commissions Conference Room.

**Note: Copies of reports, letters and/or memoranda referred to in these minutes are available in the Planning Commission Office, Room 300 of the Municipal Building, 600 Fourth Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98104**



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### APPROVED MINUTES OF THE SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

January 24, 2002

Approved February 14, 2002

**Commissioners Present:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Gregory Davis, Denise Lathrop, Phil Olbrechts, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Linda Stalzer, Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent:** Lyn Krizanich, Darryl Smith, Val Thomas

**Staff Present:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman

**Guests Present:** Teresita Batayola, SPO

### COMMISSION BUSINESS

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 7:40a.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the January 10, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

##### **Commissioner Recruitment**

Marty Curry reported that the Mayor's Office has agreed to send out a Press Release for the Planning Commission vacancies, so we are beginning the recruitment process. Chair Chuck Weinstock urged Commissioners to send to Marty names of potential candidates so that she can send the press announcement to them.

##### **Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee has contacted all Commissioners and is putting together their recommendation to be sent out in the next week to Commissioners.

### **COMMISSION AND PROJECT UPDATES**

#### **Follow-Up on Commission Meeting in Rainier Beach**

Commissioner Gregory Davis, Marty Curry and Susan McLain met with Holly Miller from the New School and Sally Clark, DON sector manager, last week. The New School is collaborating with a UW class for a design charrette this spring and invited participation from the Planning Commission.



Staff agreed to contact the School District and community representatives to further explore ideas and a time-frame for working with the community and the District on guidelines for development of the corner adjacent to the school (Rainier Ave So. and So. Henderson).

### **Elevated Transportation Company**

Commissioners Paul Tomita, Matthew Kitchen and Mimi Sheridan participated in a second Joint SDC/SPC/ETC Working Session on January 23rd. These working sessions are providing the opportunity to have in-depth discussions with ETC staff and consultants about planning and design issues related to the route, alignment and station alternatives, their draft design guidelines, and the ongoing role for the joint Commission model. A third working session will be scheduled in early March to focus on station design. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan noted that areas that will require more attention are 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue routing options through downtown, South Lake Union options, and the bridges at water crossings.

### **Northgate--Library Siting**

Chair Chuck Weinstock thanked Commissioner John Owen for testifying on behalf of the Commission at the Library Board's January 22<sup>nd</sup> public meeting on siting the new Northgate Library. The Board voted to move forward with a purchase offer for the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bon Tire site, but would not preclude further action to acquire the South Lot if that became available within the Library's timeframe. A detailed letter from the Commission was also submitted to the Library Board prior to their vote.

## **PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock introduced the discussion of focusing on the Comprehensive Plan as a framework for the Commission's analysis and review of planning issues and policies, and about the future organization and focus of planning in the City. He noted that the purpose of the discussion is to begin the Commission's assessment of relevant policies in order to re-familiarize the Commission with the actual policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and to begin to discuss how to use these policies as a framework for the Commission's work.

### **Commissioner Reports and Discussion on Comp Plan Elements:**

#### **Land Use**

Commissioner John Owen reported that the language in the Land Use Element is very general and could apply to any community in the Puget Sound region. Some of these are related to Comp Plan targets and goals for growth, and could be applied to policy decisions.

John Owen noted that the Commission could seek to apply these policies in several ways:

- Review/monitor code changes (e.g. provide parking exceptions)
- Review specific decisions related to the Comp Plan, (e.g. transportation actions recommended in the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape Design Plan)
- Ask Departments about how they are implementing specific policies(e.g. Greenstreets)
- Monitor the specific numbers (e.g. goals and thresholds for housing and employment growth)

## **Transportation**

Commissioner Paul Tomita stated that the transportation policies are very "green" (environmentally friendly) and that there are no policies that explicitly support meeting the latent SOV (Single Occupancy Vehicle) demand. Certain policies (G12) promote everything other than SOV's.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted that the element contains designations of street categories with policies defined for each category. However, the policies do not provide any guidance on how to make trade-offs or how to prioritize among policies. There are no Level of Service (LOS) expectations for streets and transit, thus no guidance on how to make decisions about concurrency, which results in a lack of guidance on how to make transportation investments.

### Commission Roles/Actions

Commissioners Tomita and Kitchen identified several possible roles for the Commission:

- Apply policies (which are largely related to modes other than SOV) to projects/recommended City actions, as in the case of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Prioritization of conflicting uses:
  - How to balance competing needs (pedestrians, transit, and freight mobility).
  - How to allocate investments to reflect this balance.

## **Housing**

Commissioner Chuck Weinstock stated that the Housing Element is very progressive. It contains some specificity with regard to expectations and goals including:

- Specifics for how much housing (units, infrastructure, location)
- What kind of housing: encourages a mix of housing, but gives conflicting direction-- maintain existing character (stay the same) and density (change the character by putting housing in small areas)
- Policies contain aggressive targets for affordability
- Policies call for predictability and balancing costs in the development process

## **Capital Facilities**

Commissioner Denise Lathrop reported that while overall this section is adequate to meet 20-year growth targets, it is very general and brief (one of the smallest elements). She noted that there are no targets for livability expressed in capacity thresholds or criteria. While the element encourages public-private partnerships, the language is general, not providing much direction. Finally co-location of public facilities is encouraged. She also voiced concern that some things are not included, such as waste reduction goals.

### Commission Roles/Actions

- Develop criteria on where and how to take advantage of opportunities that weren't in the initial planning, i.e. SLU & Rainier Valley.

## **Utilities**

Commissioner George Blomberg expressed concern that there is no recognition in this element that utilities require coordinated long-range planning; and that utilities play a role in guiding development. He noted other missing pieces to the Utilities element:

- They are not very progressive or green.
- No language encouraging cooperation/coordination
- Storm water and surface water policies are not included; combined sewer only mentioned briefly, but does not acknowledge the need for a cooperative approach with other jurisdictions
- Performance criteria are missing

### **Economic Development**

Commissioner Linda Stalzer summarized the Economic Development Element as containing the right things, but being very general. While it sets targets for business (employment) growth in specific areas, it does not identify any direction for implementing the policies. She stated that the element does not articulate what the City will do to implement these policies, including how aggressive the City's leadership will be in influencing economic development. Linda noted that increasing efficiency in the permitting process and promoting programmatic EIS's for larger area plans are part of this element, but it is not clear these have happened. She urged that the city needs to be guided by a vision and commitment to aggressively pursuing it.

#### Commission Roles/Actions

The Commission could focus on several aspects of this element, including:

- Promoting more efficiencies in the City's permitting processes
- Helping to develop the programmatic EIS to allow more efficiencies for developers and better use of development related resources in mitigating impacts (GDP relevance)
- Helping to address ways to reconcile conflicts among elements and policies

### **Human Development**

Commissioner Gregory Davis summarized the Human Development Element as having a focus on "cooperate, coordinate, and integrate." Community based organizations deliver most human services, so the City's role is less direct in this area. He noted that coordination is difficult for these CBO's.

#### Commission Roles/Actions

Gregory Davis suggested that the Planning Commission could play a role in educating people about how human services fit into the larger framework of the Comprehensive Plan and meeting our growth management commitments and goals.

### **Cultural Resources**

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan summarized the Cultural Resources Element as dealing with everything people do. In many cases it doesn't directly relate to what the City does. An exception is historic preservation where the City has a specific role. She noted that this element has broad policies regarding the public realm, focusing primarily on streets.

#### Commission Role/Actions

Mimi Sheridan suggested that the Commission could help monitor progress in this element by relating it to neighborhood plan recommendations that fall within these policies.

### **Neighborhood Planning**

Commissioner Darryl Smith was unable to attend the Commission meeting, but submitted his summary of the Neighborhood Plan Element. He noted that this element, which has been recently amended, fairly accurately reflects City and Commission priorities relating to implementing neighborhood plans. Because of its recent updating, its policies are more specific to how neighborhood plan implementation is being carried out and addresses such issues as how to change or update plans or determine the need for new plans.

### Commission Roles/Actions

Darryl Smith suggests the Commission focus on several issues regarding neighborhood plans:

- Monitoring DON and City commitments to implement neighborhood plans over time
- Review and advise the City on budgeting priorities vis a vis neighborhood plan priorities
- Ensure consistency between neighborhood plan policies/priorities and Comp Plan goals and targets

### **Discussion of Commission Roles/Actions**

Chair Chuck Weinstock noted that in the Commission's review of the Comprehensive Plan, it is important to know who is doing the work (implementing the Comp Plan), and what is being done to measure and analyze how well the city is doing in meeting its goals.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen added that a users guide to the Comp Plan could be an important tool for translating this broad document into something more understandable and usable.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop stated that the Commission needs to consider whether it focuses on more specific plans, using the Comp Plan as a guide; or on the Comp Plan itself.

Teresita Batayola, Assistant Director, Strategic Planning Office briefly outlined SPO's work this year in creating a monitoring report, based on 2000 Census data. This will be focused on current indicators, but may also include case studies of urban centers and villages. She suggested that the Commission assist SPO in some of these case studies of areas experiencing growth, with and without public investment, such as First Hill, Uptown, Greenwood and Southeast Seattle urban villages. She noted that the Commission could provide valuable perspective on how the City has grown, through editorial pieces. In response to Commissioner John Owen's question about the monitoring report indicators, Ms. Batayola stated that SPO is using the same indicators that were used in the 1996 and 1998 reports. The Commission could help review how well these indicators are describing the effects of growth and growth management policies of the City.

Ms. Batayola also reported that the City of Seattle may be asked to take a higher percentage of anticipated growth for King County when new targets are released by the state (up to 40% from current 30%). This may be challenging given the stresses from growth in some Seattle areas already. She cited the example of downtown growth which is creating stresses on the infrastructure with "server farms." These types of impacts were not fully anticipated when the Comprehensive Plan was developed.

Ms. Batayola informed the Commission that the City will be analyzing Level of Service standards this year, in response to community concern that these indicators do not allow for mitigation of growth impacts. She also noted that the LOS for open space in the Comp Plan has been used as a guide in the ProParks Levy. More departments have looked to the Comprehensive Plan and want more guidance on how to use it in setting priorities with scarce resources. Commissioner John Owen added that another example is the Elevated Transportation Company, focusing on how this ties into the City's the larger transportation goals.

Commissioners also discussed the merits of taking a detailed look at case study areas versus staying focused on larger policy issues. Chair Chuck Weinstock noted that focusing on a more detailed look at things should be done only if it is illustrative of larger policy issues.

### **PLANNING FUNCTIONS/PLANNING COMMISSION ROLES**

Commissioners continued their discussion briefly of planning functions in the City, including what is needed to provide needed planning focus and support to the new administration. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted the need for an investment strategy--referenced in the Comprehensive Plan, but never developed. Linda Stalzer stated that more focus should be on using the Comprehensive Plan to guide functional planning and city investments which would require careful monitoring of the plan. Chuck Weinstock stated that the city needs to ask the question of "what is broken?" What are the indicators that tell us what areas need attention? He voiced the opinion that we are not getting the guidance we need from the Comprehensive Plan to do this.

Chair Chuck Weinstock reported to Commissioners that the Executive Committee and other interested Commissioners are having a brown bag lunch with MaryJean Ryan, Director of SPO, on Tuesday, January 29, 2002 to discuss planning in Seattle, functional vs. broad policy and investment strategies, and the role of the Planning Commission.

### **ADJOURN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING:**

Thursday, February 14, 2002, 3:00-5:30 p.m., Municipal Building, Room 221, Boards and Commissions Conference Room.



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### FINAL MINUTES OF THE SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

February 14, 2002

Approved March 28, 2002

**Commissioners Present:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Lyn Krizanich, Denise Lathrop, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent:** Gregory Davis, Phil Olbrechts

**Staff Present:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman

**Guests Present:** Peter Steinbrueck, Seattle City Council President; Doris Brown

### COMMISSION BUSINESS

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the January 24, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

##### **Commissioner Recruitment**

Marty Curry reported that Mayor Nickels' office is reviewing their list of possible candidates to see if there are people they want to recommend for the Planning Commission positions. Chair Chuck Weinstock also encouraged Commissioners to forward any recommendations of potential candidates to Marty Curry or him to contact.

#### **COMMISSION AND PROJECT UPDATES**

##### **Elevated Transportation Company**

Commissioners Paul Tomita and Matthew Kitchen participated in a special workshop with ETC, the Queen Anne Uptown neighborhood, and the Seattle Center. Marty Curry and John Rahaim facilitated a discussion of the options and related issues. Commissioners reported that the workshop was a "rousing success," and resulted in very constructive options with the Seattle Center and Uptown neighborhood representatives. The third Joint SDC/SPC/ETC Working Session is scheduled for March 12 and will focus on station design.

##### **Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

The Commission has received the amendment package from SPO containing amendments submitted by community members and the City for consideration in this year's Comprehensive Plan amendment process. Commissioners Linda Stalzer, Lyn Krizanich and Denise Lathrop will work with staff to review these proposals and develop recommendations to submit Council regarding which amendments should move forward for analysis by SPO. These recommendations will be brought to the full Commission for approval prior to Council's public hearing on March 19, 2002.

#### **Annual Commission Retreat**

Commissioners John Owen, Matthew Kitchen and Chuck Weinstock will work with staff to set the agenda for this year's annual retreat. Marty Curry reminded Commissioners of the goal of having the Commission 2002 work program completed soon, allowing the retreat to focus on topical issues. She noted that this might be a good opportunity to invite new department directors to participate in a discussion of issues of mutual interest and concern.

#### **Alaska Way Viaduct (AWV)**

The Planning and Design Commissions are proposing several joint working sessions with WSDOT and the City to work on planning, design issues, and develop recommendations on a preferred alternative. Commissioner Paul Tomita, who represents the Planning Commission on the Mayor's Leadership Group, reported that some of the options recently presented are more refined and allow for reconnecting all streets up toward Broad Street in the Lower Queen Anne - South Lake Union neighborhoods. Commissioner Val Thomas expressed concern and the need for early co-ordination with the privately funded Sculpture Garden. This is an opportunity where the Commission supports two very important goals and needs to weigh in on the importance of project co-ordination. Commissioners Lyn Krizanich, Paul Tomita and Val Thomas suggested the we invite proponents from the Museum and the AWV project to our next full Commission meeting.

#### **Follow-up Discussion with MaryJean Ryan**

The Executive Committee will follow-up with MaryJean Ryan on planning organization ideas at the March 5<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting. She will bring her proposal(s) for input. This will be an opportunity to begin discussion of the Planning Commission's relationship with a reorganized planning functions.

### **PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

#### **Review/Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies**

At the last Commission meeting, each Commissioner reviewed an element of the Comprehensive Plan and reported to the group an assessment of relevant policies (see the Commission minutes from January 24<sup>th</sup>). Chair Chuck Weinstock reminded Commissioners of their assignment for this meeting -- to identify goals/policies from each Plan element that are important to the Commission, and to identify questions that might be used in a "Comprehensive Plan framework or criteria". It is hoped that this step will provide a framework for developing a guide for the Commission to assess Comprehensive Plan consistency of City actions and policies.

#### **Housing**

Chair Chuck Weinstock started off the discussion by summarizing the main goals of the Housing Element:

1. Accommodating Growth (monitoring housing production) and Maintaining Affordability,
2. Encouraging Diversity of housing types within every urban village, and
3. Providing Housing Affordable to Low-Income Households

Chuck Weinstock and Val Thomas offered additional comments regarding what the Commission might focus on. They noted that zoned capacity needs to be assessed, particularly to determine what types of housing is being developed versus what is permitted. More data is needed to monitor affordability, with benchmarks developed and used in assessing progress in reaching these goals. Chuck Weinstock stated that the Office of Housing is well tended right now, providing a much clearer focus on housing than prior to its existence. Commissioner Val Thomas stated concern that approval times, which have reportedly been shortened for City permits, do not reflect what is happening with housing projects. He and Chuck both stated that new housing projects should be measured separately to accurately assess whether permit times have indeed improved.

Commission discussion led to several observations. Sub-area plans can be used in some areas to provide more detailed strategies for providing a mix of housing types, but the City still needs to more clearly articulate its approach to achieving an income mix that mirrors city-wide income levels in urban villages and centers. Additional indicators should be added to the Comprehensive Plan monitoring report, particularly relating to accommodating growth (housing production) and maintaining affordability.

### **Land Use**

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich noted that she used the Urban Centers Committee topics in reviewing and applying the Land Use Goals. She and Commissioner John Owen voiced concern that the land use policies are too general to use as a specific guide. They proposed the need for a mid-level set of questions or objectives that more explicitly express the intent of the broad Comprehensive Plan Land Use goals and policies. Lyn Krizanich stated that Phoenix has a very user-friendly Comprehensive Plan tool that summarizes their relevant goals and policies in a fold-out document. She gave a copy to Marty Curry for staff to consider in developing the Commission's tool.

Chair Chuck Weinstock proposed that the Commission could approach the Comprehensive Plan material as a Comprehensive Plan threshold screen to determine what things should come to the Commission, and as a tool for the Commission to analyze and comment on projects.

Commissioner Val Thomas questioned whether the Commission was dealing only with physical planning projects and the built environment. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen argued that, for example, economic elements have a great effect on the built environment. He also noted transportation is not merely a physical development issue, rather it is a behavioral pattern of mobility. The Commission's approach should be grounded in a set of values, then applied to planning policies and project. Commissioner Linda Stalzer asked about the implication of taking on economic issues and whether that would include advocating for jobs and training. Commissioner Lyn Krizanich suggested the Commission create a list of core values that embody the Comprehensive Plan Vision. Commissioner John Owen stressed that the Commission should look at those areas where we could have the most effect; physical impacts that the Planning Commission can affect the most.

### **Neighborhood Planning**

Commissioner Darryl Smith reminded Commissioners that neighborhood plans were created in response to growth being targeted to specific areas of the city (per GMA targets). He stated that important issues for the Commission to monitor are: how people are involved in the planning process, and how priorities for funding are set.

Darryl Smith cited Goal N2 - Consistency between Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plans, as one possible starting point. Chuck Weinstock added that a key question is whether decision-making in the City is different because of the Comprehensive Plan.



Commissioner John Owen suggested creating benchmarks for monitoring the number of housing units being constructed, the cost relative to incomes, and overall resource allocation at the neighborhood level (for designated urban villages and centers). Commissioner Linda Stalzer pointed out that one can find support for conflicting Comprehensive Plan goals, i.e. West Seattle Design Guidelines and SeaTran's street design standards - What has priority? The potential of ETC down California Avenue is in conflict with the Design Guidelines, but fits the goals for Urban Centers.

### **Capital Facilities**

Commissioner Denise Lathrop reported on the Capital Facilities, focusing in part on the public process of siting public facilities. She proposed that the Commission focus its attention on:

- better coordination among City departments and with other agencies on development and siting of public facilities
- creating a city-wide perspective regarding priorities and allocation of capital facilities resources, setting clear benchmarks beginning with the current status of capital facilities and articulating goals to be achieved
- financing implications, including life-cycle costs, as well as opportunities

Denise Lathrop cited examples from West Seattle and the Pro-Parks Levy where facilities were acquired but funding for maintenance and/or redevelopment were not budgeted. This creates a dilemma about who is responsible for the ongoing operation and maintenance of such facilities. She cited Northgate as another example of ineffective city-wide coordination, and the potential of lost opportunities for the lack of an integrated approach to capital facilities investments that is consistent with Comp Plan goals for urban centers.

### **Transportation Element**

Commissioners Paul Tomita and Matthew Kitchen reported on the Transportation Element.

Commissioner Tomita noted that there are several ways to evaluate policies and plans:

- Capacity -- includes everything but SOV (LOS standards?)
- Coordination -- supports Urban Village strategy, neighborhood plans and land use policies
- Street designations -- supports various types of users (relative/mean)
- Neighborhood Street -- protected from through traffic
- Parking -- encourage in commercial areas; discourage commuter parking

Matthew Kitchen noted that one key question is what the mechanism is for achieving the Comp Plan goals. Paul Tomita responded that street designations are critical to how the City makes transportation design and investment decisions. Further questions were articulated by Commissioners including how street designations relate to specific land uses and how functionality is assessed within specific areas. Matthew noted that it would take a major effort to create more sophisticated LOS measurements tools. This seems to reinforce the Commission's focus on broader criteria for measuring Comp Plan progress.

### **Economic Development**

Commissioner Linda Stalzer reported that in reviewing the Economic Development Element she identified two kinds of actions that relate to implementing the Comprehensive Plan:

- Programmatic -- does the City have the right programs in place to further Comprehensive Plan goals, and if so, are they implemented in ways that further the Comprehensive Plan goals, i.e. the CIP?
- Project Specific -- are projects selected and designed with the economic health of the City's neighborhood, community, and downtown (*urban?*) centers in mind, i.e. SeaTran and Land Use? What sort of analysis should the City do to resolve on-going conflicts in these areas, and should it be resolved through regulatory reform? The ETC is an example of this conflict.

### **Conclusions**

Chair Chuck Weinstock asked for overall comments and ideas from Commissioners.

Commissioner George Blomberg suggested an initial screen of "what does the Planning Commission have an opportunity to affect?"

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted that the Commission will play different roles in different situations. He offered four potential roles that the Commission could focus on in its "stewardship" of the Comprehensive Plan policies:

1. Education
2. Monitoring and Assessment
3. Guiding Practices to Support Policies
4. Refining Policies

### **POTENTIAL COMMISSION FOCUS AND ACTIONS**

(compilation of ideas from discussion of Comp Plan elements)

#### **Planning Commission Overall Approach**

- Restate the list of core values that embody the Comprehensive Plan Vision
- Create a user-friendly Comprehensive Plan tool summarizing relevant goals and policies with Urban Center Goals
- Comprehensive Plan threshold screen for Commission action on policies/projects
- Comprehensive Plan screen/criteria to guide Commission analysis and comment on specific policies and projects

#### **Measures of Comp Plan Consistency and Progress**

- Indicators to measure how well the City is doing in implementing neighborhood plans, particularly focused on achieving goals to ensure areas receiving growth receive needed mitigation, amenities and services
- Indicators to measure how well the City is doing in reaching housing goals/targets -- housing production (units built by type of housing; affordability by neighborhood)
- Indicators to measure how well the City is doing in joint planning/coordination of human services
- Indicators that measure how well the City is doing in dollars spent in urban villages (by type of investment; results in achieving neighborhood plan/Comp Plan goals)
- Indicators to measure how well the City is doing in implementation of city-wide Capital Facilities and financing implications
- Index for assessing where transportation funds are allocated (i.e. autos, transit, pedestrians, bikes)
- Index for determining consistency between Street Design Manual and Neighborhood Design Guidelines, and Urban Center Goals
- Assessment of Street Designations to ensure they reflect and are consistent with City decisions on land use and functionality

### **INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION WITH COUNCILMEMBER PETER STEINBRUECK**

City Council President Peter Steinbrueck joined the Planning Commission for a brief introduction and discussion on upcoming issues and projects. He stated that the Council hopes to have their work program completed by mid-to-late March. The Council will place an increased emphasis on the City's budget. Their goal is to help the City achieve a greater degree of sustainability through economic downturns and increased oversight at all times, focused on a sustainable future. He noted that the Council will have regular budget meetings after the Monday Council meetings.

Councilmember Steinbrueck reflected that the transition in administration has resulted in some uncertainty regarding priorities and relationships. The change in Council committee assignments is also resulting in some transition time. He noted that the goal of the City Council is to serve citizens the best way possible.

Councilmember Steinbrueck highlighted some issues that are emerging for 2002, including a Charter initiative to call for District elections of Councilmembers, and user fees (e.g. a tax on commercial parking fees) to help fund transportation maintenance and infrastructure needs. He noted that one idea is to direct the parking user fees back to the communities where the revenues come from to ensure benefits to those communities, adding that this funding source could generate from \$15 - 20 million annually.

Chair Chuck Weinstock stated that the Planning Commission's general themes focus on our role as stewards of the Comprehensive Plan. Within that context, the Commission is asking the question of whether fiscal decisions are "Comprehensive Plan positive." Chuck Weinstock related that the Commission would like to see closer monitoring, using benchmarks, of such Comp Plan goals as housing affordability. Councilmember Steinbrueck spoke to the importance of the housing levy renewal and also stated that the City needs to re-examine the original targets for the housing/jobs balance. He voiced concern about the accuracy of the numbers today and variations within the neighborhoods in terms of actual growth.

Councilmember Steinbrueck also predicted that this will be the year of Northgate, and urged decisive leadership with planning and implementation in Northgate to take advantage of the opportunity with redevelopment of the South Lot. He also stated that the Northgate GDP (General Development Plan) has not worked and should be repealed and replaced with something that more clearly supports pedestrian oriented development. He stated that he would like to hear from the Planning Commission, including how the Council can benefit from the Commission's advice and help.

Chuck Weinstock noted that the Planning Commission has consistently urged City departments to better integrate and coordinate their efforts in Northgate, but with few resulting changes in how the City operates.

Commissioner Val Thomas told Mr. Steinbrueck that the Commission would like to be more in-touch with Council, and to more intentionally integrate Council and Commission work program priorities. He also mentioned that the Commission was reviewing its structure and is open to ideas and suggestions on how to approach this. Councilmember Steinbrueck voiced his appreciation for the Commission's focus and input. He encouraged the Commission to meet with key Councilmembers including Judy Nicastro, Richard McIver, and Richard Conlin.

Councilmember Steinbrueck identified three of his top priorities: Northgate, a Smart Growth Fund, and the Alaska Way Viaduct. The Smart Growth Fund would be a tool available to the City and investors along transit corridors where early acquisition of property (landbanking) would give the City the ability to set guidelines for development that meet neighborhood plan and long-range Comprehensive Plan goals. The Enterprise Foundation is a potential investor, giving 5-year loans with low interest rates for property acquisition. Commissioner Chuck Weinstock stated that a key issue for the Commission is whether the City is willing to meet the same expectations that are required of private developers in developing new facilities. Building to meet urban density goals is an issue with libraries and community centers (with typical plans for one-story buildings and surface parking).

Councilmember Steinbrueck acknowledged that the Alaska Way Viaduct is his personal high priority and invited the Commission to report on its involvement and insights to Council. He closed by

saying he would like to invite the Commission occasionally to the Council Monday morning briefings to report on its activities. He encouraged the Commission to build relationships with the Council so that it can be effective in its relations to the legislative branch.

**SUMMARY**

Chuck Weinstock summarized the meeting by asking Commissioners how to proceed in moving forward with projects, policies and programs. He noted that the Commission's work needs to be related to the Strategic Planning Office, Seattle Transportation, and City Council workplans. He also noted that top priorities over the next couple of months will be:

- Alaska Way Viaduct
- ETC
- Transportation (organizational structure/focus and meeting with Grace Crunican, the new Director)
- SPO/planning organization (including working with Director MaryJean Ryan)
- Briefing the Council Housing Committee (at the request of Judy Nicastro, Chair)
- Monitoring neighborhood plans implementation

Commissioner, John Owen also urged that the Commission continue its focus as the Comprehensive Plan Steward and for the Commission to develop a set of criteria for applying the plan's goals to its work.

**ADJOURN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

**NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING:**

Thursday, February 28, 2002

7:30-9:30 a.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221.



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

#### FINAL MINUTES

**March 14, 2002**

**Approved March 28, 2002**

**Commissioners Present:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Lyn Krizanich, Denise Lathrop, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Linda Stalzer, Val Thomas, and Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent:** Gregory Davis, Phil Olbrechts, and Darryl Smith

**Staff Present:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman, and Susan McLain

#### **Guests Present:**

Seattle Transportation: Grace Crunican, Director; Anne Fiske-Zuniga, Deputy Director

Design Commission: Layne Cubel, Coordinator; Commissioners David Spiker, Don Royse

City Design: John Rahaim, Director; Robert Scully; Lyle Bicknell; Brad Gassman

Strategic Planning Office: Susan Sanchez, Asst. Director; Bob Chandler; Dori Costa; Steve Pearce

WSDOT: Tom Madden, Project Manager; Amy Grotefendt

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the minutes from the February 14, 2002 Planning Commission meeting was deferred because of a lack of forum at the beginning of the meeting.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

##### **Commissioner Recruitment**

Five people have applied for the Planning Commission vacancies. Commissioners Linda Stalzer, Lyn Krizanich and Chuck Weinstock are reviewing the applications. They will advise Alex Field, Boards and Commissions Administrator, on those that they recommend forwarding to the Mayor for consideration.

##### **Annual Commission Retreat**

The Retreat Planning Committee presented a recommendation to delay the annual retreat until early May. This will be more timely since Council action will likely be completed on the planning reorganization by then. We also hope to have new Commissioners on board by then.

##### **2002 Work Program Commission Priorities**

Staff have prepared a 6-month-work program reflecting the priorities the Commission has identified. A key goal now is to ensure that every Commissioner is actively involved in at least one activity and

Committee. Chair Chuck Weinstock asked that Commissioners review the work program and identify those projects and areas they are willing to work on.

### **COMMISSION BUSINESS AND PROJECT UPDATES**

#### **Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

Chuck Weinstock thanked Commissioners Lyn Krizanich, Linda Stalzer and Denise Lathrop for working with staff to review and prepare a Commission letter with recommendations on the proposed amendments that have been submitted to the City for consideration. Commissioners approved the letter to be submitted to Councilmember Judy Nicastro next week.

#### **Elevated Transportation Company**

Chair Chuck Weinstock also thanked Commissioners Mimi Sheridan, John Owen and Paul Tomita who participated in Tuesday's 3<sup>rd</sup> collaborative SDC/SPC/ETC Working Session. This session focused on station design issues. Commissioner John Owen noted his continuing concern about the impacts of the structure; Commissioner Mimi Sheridan pointed out that the group has provided comments on the ETC's draft design guidelines.

#### **Alaska Way Viaduct**

A collaborative SPC/SDC working session is scheduled for March 27. This is the second session in a series, and is an opportunity to provide input on planning and design-related issues in the alternatives under consideration.

### **PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION**

#### **INTRODUCTION/PRESENTATION**

##### **Grace Crunican, Director of Seattle Transportation**

Chair Chuck Weinstock welcomed newly appointed Director of Seattle Transportation, Grace Crunican. Noting that she had met with some of the Commissioners earlier to describe the proposed reorganization proposal, he asked her to talk briefly about key issues and priorities for 2002. Ms. Crunican invited Commissioners to ask questions as a way to help her learn more about the Planning Commission's interests in transportation.

Grace Crunican briefly outlined the proposed new organization of Seattle Transportation. She likened the integration of planning into the department as "attaching the head to the body" of transportation planning and implementation. She outlined several functional groups that would be incorporated into the new organization's policy planning and major projects division: major projects, revenue development, neighborhood and corridor planning, and parking and mobility management. Ms. Crunican stated that her overall goal is to achieve more integrated planning with a broad theme of mobility management. Her priorities are a) to work with the "vision" director to get clear on planning and implementation documents; and b) integrating corridor planning with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. In both cases a first step will be to see what is in place and where the gaps are. She observed that the piece between planning and implementation -- strategy -- does seem to be missing. Ms. Crunican expressed her desire to create a sense of unified mission within Seattle Transportation around the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Val Thomas asked Ms. Crunican what is between the Comprehensive Plan and the Street Use Manual and also asked how she plans to manage the relationship between the Street Use Manual and the Land Use Code. He outlined the difficulties facing developers in the permitting process in getting the City to resolve conflicts between these two documents. Ms. Crunican responded that she wants to match assets with desired improvements. This will require eliminating the sometimes arbitrary nature transportation standards are applied. She noted that the subarea

visions and plans should be a place for partners to figure out how to accomplish specific objectives. She admitted that she has yet to develop a clear understanding of how subarea and other plans influence land use and street use standards. Commissioner Linda Stalzer noted that it is also important to understand and communicate transportation standards early in a project's planning process.

Grace Crunican stated her interest in working as a partner with the Planning Commission. She said she regards herself as an implementer. She sees the need for more clarity on where we want to go with streets -- what mobility goals we are trying to accomplish. She wants to facilitate the community development goals, and she brings her understanding of the public works aspects of projects to the process. She believes it is possible to coordinate more effectively in order to gain a "good return on the transportation money."

#### **ALASKAN WAY VIADUCT BRIEFING AND UPDATE**

##### **Bob Chandler, City Project Manager; Tom Madden, WSDOT Project Manager**

Bob Chandler and Tom Madden, lead City and WSDOT staff for the Alaskan Way Viaduct project, briefed the Commission on the project's preliminary design alternatives, as well as key milestones and decisions in the coming months. Since the Planning and Design Commissions are providing a collaborative approach to the project, several Design Commissioners and City Design staff joined the discussion.

Bob Chandler introduced the other members of the team participating in the presentation: Tom Madden, WSDOT, and Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues. He stated that the project team hopes to have preliminary designs completed by the summer of 2002, with the draft EIS ready for public review in December 2002. Groundbreaking is scheduled for 2005/2006, with a finished product by 2010/2011.

Bob Chandler and Tom Madden outlined Options A, B, C and D, with all their variations, pro's and con's, and how the seawall is addressed in each option. Bob Chandler explained that there isn't funding for the project yet, but that the City and the State are moving ahead with the larger vision and will cost-out the various alternatives when the alternatives are further along. He noted that retrofitting the existing Viaduct would be almost as costly as reconstruction alternatives. It would provide only a temporary fix and would not address the pressing need to replace the seawall.

Commissioners stated they were encouraged by the creativity of the options presented and the positive collaborative nature of the project. They also were pleased to hear that the project alternatives assume transportation alternatives such as light rail, monorail, and/or trolley systems will be in place within the downtown corridor. Commissioners finally noted their appreciation that all options contain a wide pedestrian promenade, bike lanes and waterfront access. They encouraged continued exploration of ideas such as placing the trolley line in the vacated Battery Street tunnel and connecting to the Dexter Street bike lanes, along with the larger goal of re-connecting lower Queen Anne and South Lake Union neighborhoods.

Commissioners expressed some concerns including:

- fixing or replacing the seawall
- maintaining access to midtown during demolition and construction
- providing northern access opportunities
- addressing timing with the new Sculpture Park to avoid conflicts with this project

Commissioners recommended that a cost/benefit analysis, containing construction impact costs, be included as soon as they are available. Bob Chandler acknowledged that cost figures will certainly weigh into the decisions but that this is still the idea generation/examination stage of the project.

**Wrap up: Conclusions and Key Issues**

Commission staff noted that the Planning Commission and the Design Commission will advise and provide comments both informally and through formal letters on the project alternatives, and on planning and design issues. The Commission concurs with project staff in its goal of finding the best alternative -- one that fits the City's vision for the next 100 years; meets the transportation capacity and access requirements, and meets the City's broad urban design standards. Both Commissions will be active in upcoming working sessions with City and WSDOT staff, to review conceptual alternatives, provide input on a preferred conceptual alternative, and evaluate alternative approaches to design of the waterfront public right-of-way.

**PLANNING REORGANIZATION: FOLLOW-UP FROM DISCUSSION WITH MARYJEAN RYAN**

Several Commissioners were briefed by MaryJean Ryan, Grace Crunican and Diane Sugimura on the proposed planning reorganization on Wednesday, March 13. The Executive Committee will discuss further the planning reorganization proposals, including those affecting the Planning Commission, at their next meeting, March 19, 2002. Chair Chuck Weinstock invited other Commissioners to weigh-in with their ideas and concerns to help develop a Commission response and strategy for providing input to the City Council.

**ADJOURN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

**NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, March 28, 2002  
7:30-9:30 a.m.  
Municipal Building, Room 221.





# City of Seattle Seattle Planning Commission

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor  
Marty Curry, Executive Director

## **FINAL MINUTES OF THE SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION** **March 28, 2002** **Approved April 11, 2002**

**Commissioners Present:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; George Blomberg, Gregory Davis, Lyn Krizanich, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent:** Matthew Kitchen, Denise Lathrop, Phil Olbrechts,

**Staff Present:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman, Susan McLain

**Others Present:** Teresita Batayola, Diana Cornelius, Tom Hauger, Lish Whitson and Michael Stanger, from the Strategic Planning Office

### **Call to Order**

Chair Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m.

### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

#### **Approval of Minutes: February 14, 2002 and March 14, 2002 Meetings**

Commissioners unanimously approved the minutes from the February 14, 2002 and March 14, 2002 Commission meetings as written.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

#### **Project Updates**

##### **Elevated Transportation Company (ETC)**

Director Marty Curry reported on the briefing she and John Rahaim, Manager of the Seattle Design Commission (SDC), gave to the ETC Board on the joint SDC/SPC working sessions and their first position paper. ETC Boardmembers expressed hope that both Commissions would endorse the ETC project, and asked how the Commissions address such issues. ETC Board Chair Tom Weeks voiced interest in having the Commissions' position regarding planning issues and aspects of the ETC project. Marty Curry and John Rahaim assured the Board that their Commissions will consider endorsement, but noted that their primary focus is on advising the ETC and the City on planning and design issues. They also noted that the Commissions will prepare a second position paper soon that will address planning-related issues.

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich asked whether the Commission would consider a "no endorsement" position if it found cause to do so. Marty Curry responded that any position takes strong majority support. In the past when the Commissioners were divided, they would not take a position; rather, the Commission would provide advice based on its analysis of the options.

They would focus on the City's planning goals, and the needs and interests of the community as a whole in carrying out this analysis and providing advice.

### **Alaska Way Viaduct**

The Seattle Planning Commission and Seattle Design Commission held a joint working session with City staff and Viaduct consultants on March 27. Commissioner Paul Tomita briefly reported that the working session focused on several key design aspects of the options including the impact of off/on ramps along the Alaska Way waterfront corridor, and open space on the north and south terminus of the Viaduct. Susanne Friedman reported that the Commissions are being asked to make recommendations on the preferred alternative prior to the City/WSDOT decision in June or July. Commissioner George Blomberg noted that the planning team does appear to be pursuing some alternatives more aggressively than others. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan stated the planning team did not discuss retrofit alternatives. Marty Curry noted that staff and consultants have concluded that retrofitting the existing structure would only add 10 years or so to its life, but is not a permanent solution. This alternative is included in the DEIS. Commissioner Paul Tomita added that a lot of data about the retrofit option exists already and has been discussed by the Leadership Group.

### **Planning Re-Organization**

Several Commissioners have met with Councilmembers Licata, Drago and Nicastro to share the Commission's position on the proposed planning reorganization. Meetings or contact with other Councilmembers is being pursued prior to the full Council meeting on Monday, April 1, 2002. The Council Finance Committee will have a briefing/discussion and could vote on the proposed ordinance as early as Wednesday, April 3, 2002.

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich reported from the meeting with Councilmember Jan Drago that CM Drago is concerned about viability of the City's long-range planning function. Commissioners John Owen and Denise Lathrop met with Councilmember Nick Licata, reporting that he is concerned about the coordination between land use and transportation issues.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan suggested the discussion about the planning re-organization should be broadened to include the public. Commissioners Val Thomas and Linda Stalzer disagreed, saying that departmental re-organizations are a business and management decision which do not require involving the public. Chair Chuck Weinstock stated that the Executive Committee will discuss next steps at their meeting next week.

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MONITORING REPORT**

Chair Chuck Weinstock welcomed Strategic Planning Office staff and introduced Tom Hauger who in turn introduced other staff working on the Comprehensive Plan Monitoring and Case Studies project. Tom Hauger began with a brief history -- noting that the City committed to regular monitoring and reporting on the Comprehensive Plan after it was adopted in 1994. This process began with the identification of goals that should be monitored and of indicators that would measure progress in reaching those goals. He acknowledged that this process was driven by the availability of data, either within the City or from other governmental and industry

sources. Lish Whitson stated that SPO analyzed updated growth information in urban villages for the 2000 Growth Monitoring Report, but that information from the 2000 Census is now available for this year's monitoring report. Diana Cornelius, SPO demographer, outlined some of the general population trends she is extracting from Census data, including demographic trends over time (age and race in particular).

Commission Chair Chuck Weinstock asked if this year's report will draw conclusions regarding how we are doing in reaching Comprehensive Plan goals. Lish Whitson responded that staff would be writing the conclusions that address some of these issues. In response to Susan McLain's question about review of those conclusions made by staff, SPO staff said they did not have plans for additional review at this time. Commissioner George Blomberg asked about environmental indicators; Commissioner John Owen suggested that transportation data be expanded to include commute vehicle miles traveled and hours waiting in traffic. Commissioner Paul Tomita asked whether the transportation analysis will examine how investment correlates with growth and development. Tom Hauger suggested that technical appendices would include expanded information that is not included in the monitoring report itself.

Michael Stanger outlined the proposal for the Monitoring Report Case Studies. He stated that the case studies will help the City examine the differences in growth and development among the selected urban villages. This will provide the basis for developing strategies to meet the Comprehensive Plan goals both in areas growing more slowly and those growing more rapidly. The five neighborhoods selected for the study include: Greenwood-Phinney Ridge, West Seattle Junction, Rainier Beach, 12th Avenue, and Uptown/Queen Anne.

Commissioner Val Thomas suggested tracking vacancy rates, noting that growth in neighborhoods like Rainier Beach are filling available units but not producing new units. Increased services should be provided where the population is growing and not be just tied to new development.

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich asked why downtown is not being examined and suggested that the City should be looking at the densest area of the city. Tom Hauger responded that downtown neighborhoods are unique in the City, therefore the "lessons learned" from such a case study would not be applicable to other neighborhoods. Commissioner Val Thomas echoed Lyn Krizanich's concern, noting that the City has said it wants to view downtown as a neighborhood. He suggested downtown neighborhoods be analyzed but not necessarily compared to other neighborhoods. Commissioner Val Thomas noted that if all downtown neighborhoods are not included, he would suggest at least adding Belltown to the case study list.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan proposed that SPO create a "snapshot" of each of the 38 neighborhood growth areas, with more in-depth case studies on only the five areas. She suggested including statistical data, historical information and an inventory of plans and regulatory information. Marty Curry concurred with this suggestion and encouraged SPO staff to consider providing this basic data.

Commissioner Linda Stalzer noted that property ownership is important in how development occurs. For example, what is happening in areas with large parcels? Michael Stanger agreed

that property ownership influences development patterns. Commissioner Linda Stalzer noted that many non-quantifiable factors exist that contribute to development in a neighborhood. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan emphasized the importance of talking with people in the neighborhoods, and developers.

Commissioner John Owen encouraged staff to clearly articulate their hypothesis. This hypothesis would be "proved" through a series of questions such as what is the role of infrastructure; what is the role of public investments, what is the role of the neighborhood plan? Chair Chuck Weinstock asked if the staff is clear as to which questions they are asking. For example, it would be interesting to ask where growth is and is not occurring, and identify reasons for these differences. Marty Curry said it would be interesting to compare slow-growing and fast-growing neighborhoods. Michael Stanger responded that they want to be careful to not imply qualitative contrasts between neighborhoods.

Teresita Batayola agreed that it would be interesting to examine the impact of the neighborhood plan on an area's growth. Chair Chuck Weinstock noted that the Comprehensive Plan monitoring raises broad policy questions, such as the relationship between public investment and growth. Tom Hauger stated that the Planning Commission plays an important role in raising broad policy questions to elected leaders. Teresita Batayola invited the Planning Commission to suggest what policy questions need to be asked and addressed in this effort. Commissioner John Owen agreed that the Commission should help raise policy issues, and suggested the questions or hypothesis the staff is using to frame the analysis be included in the report.

### **Next Steps**

Tom Hauger said the report should be completed by Fall, 2002. He noted that SPO staff will be configured differently from the current staff due to re-organization. Staff currently working on this project will get as far as they can over the next month or so and leave it ready for the new staff to pick up when the reorganization is completed. Chair Chuck Weinstock thanked SPO staff for their work. He directed staff to work with SPO to identify specific ways and places in the process for the Commission to have input, particularly on those issues raised today.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

*Note: Complete copies of reports; letters and/or memoranda referred to in these minutes are available in the Planning Commission Office; Room 300; Municipal Building; 600 4th Avenue; Seattle; WA 98104.*

Attachment

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# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION FINAL MINUTES April 11, 2002 Approved April 25, 2002

**Commissioners Present:** Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; Gregory Davis, Lyn Krizanich, Denise Lathrop, Phil Olbrechts, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, and Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent:** George Blomberg, John Owen, Chuck Weinstock, and Val Thomas

**Staff Present:** Marty Curry and Susanne Friedman

**Guests Present:**

Alex Field and Jessica Levy, Youth on Boards and Commissions - YMCA  
Chris Rogers and Megan Kagel, Seattle Art Museum

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Matthew Kitchen called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the March 28, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved pending an amendment requested by Mimi Sheridan; the draft EIS for the Alaskan Way Viaduct project may not include/address retro-fit alternatives.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

**Annual Commission Retreat**

Staff is exploring locations for several dates in May for the annual retreat, a suggestion was made to look into the use of community center space for the evenings. We are looking at two Thursdays -- late afternoon/evening times (4:30 - 8:30p.m.) on May 16<sup>th</sup> and May 30<sup>th</sup>. Locations and final agendas to be determined.

**Visit with Graduate Students from University of Calgary**

Tuesday, April 15, Sally Clark, Southeast NDM, is hosting a group of graduate planning students from University of Calgary in Southeast Seattle. Commissioners Darryl Smith and Gregory Davis have agreed to meet with them.

**Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

Thanks to Linda Stalzer for testifying for the Commission at the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Public Hearing on April 2. The City Council Land Use Committee held a forum following the Public Hearing on Wednesday, April 10, 2002 to further discuss proposed amendments. Ms. Stalzer attended this special session along with staff. Judy Nicastro was very interested in the Planning Commission's role in a public discussion on view corridor issues. John Skelton's group in DCLU has already completed an assessment of view corridors.

### **Elevated Transportation Company (ETC)**

Marty Curry, John Rahaim, Mimi Sheridan and Donald Royse will brief the City Council Ad Hoc ETC Committee on Friday, April 12 on the Commissions' comments on the ETC Design Guidelines, on Position Paper #1, and initial planning issues identified to be addressed in Position Paper #2. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan expressed concern that the land use section of the draft EIS does not include zoning impacts and issues.

The ETC has released its Draft EIS for public review. Susan McLain is coordinating the Commission's review and comments on this. A set of draft comments will be brought to the Commission's April 25 meeting.

### **Alaskan Way Viaduct**

A second joint SPC/SDC working session is scheduled for April 24. Materials and the agenda will be sent out next week. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan observed that the City had been very specific about including trees, sidewalks, etc in the project scope.

### **April 25 Commission Meeting**

The Planning Commission will have a briefing on the Housing Levy at our next meeting, Thursday, April 25. Prior to that time the City Council will be discussing the Levy proposal (April 15, May 6, 2:30 p.m.) and will hold a public hearing on May 6 at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

### **Recruitment Update**

Alex Field is working on recruitment for the Commission. The Mayor has several people he would like to consider for open positions and would like to appoint people he knows. Alex will get back to the Commission with names later in the month.

### **Reorganization Proposal**

Commissioners had a discussion on the proposed amendment being presented by Councilmember Richard Conlin on Monday, April 15, 2002. Vice-chair, Matthew Kitchen summarized the proposed changes:

1. DCLU would provide technical assistance and staff support
2. The Commission would retain hiring authority
3. The Commission would have a 0.5 position reduction
4. The Commission would retain discretionary funding

The majority of concerns surrounded staffing and budgetary issues. Commissioner Lyn Krizanich wanted to know how the Commission would make up the gap for the reduction of 0.5 Planning Analyst. There was concern voiced about the wording that planning staff would provide technical/professional support on specific policy issues and projects from DCLU (and Seattle Transportation?). Commissioner Denise Lathrop pointed out that this could put staff and the Commission in a difficult position, in that the department has control over staff, and the Commission might be making a recommendation that conflicts with the department. Commissioners also felt that there might be conflicts over budgetary issues.

The Commission's position on the proposed amendment was summarized as follows:

1. To accept co-location within DCLU.

2. With the 0.5 FTE reduction, additional technical staff support would come from DCLU.
3. The Commission would have veto power on choice of staffing if hiring authority was not forthcoming.
4. The Commission would retain its discretionary budget to continue with community outreach and Commission initiated projects.

### **COMMISSION BUSINESS AND PROJECT UPDATES**

Commissioner Gregory Davis has been asked to serve on an Advisory Committee for Human Services with the Comprehensive Plan since it does not have a Human Development Section.

### **PRESENTATION**

#### **Youth on Boards and Commissions**

Alex Field and Jessica Levy joined the Commission for a briefing on the Youth on Boards and Commissions program. The program is a way to get young people more involved in local government and is the first pilot project of its kind in the nation. The age group for the program is 18-29, funding has come from a Henry Jackson Ford 2-year grant. City Council adopted a Resolution designating one position for one year, as a full voting member, for youth. Ten boards and commissions were selected for the first year of the program with additional boards and commissions to be added the second year. Outreach the first year received 85 applicants for the 10 positions available. The YMCA provides support and training while the boards and commissions provide a mentor. Youth meet with one another to share experiences and training. Council will be briefed on the program after one year, with a written report at the end of the two-year timeframe.

Commissioner Gregory Davis wanted to know what sort of outreach had been done to recruit for the program. Commissioner Paul Tomita suggested expanding the program to District Councils, Chambers of Commerce, and stewardship groups. Commissioners expressed strong support to be included in the program for the second year where regulatory commissions are being added. Alex Field will move forward and add the Planning Commission to the list, checking back in later in the process.

#### **Sculpture Park Briefing**

The Planning Commission participates on the North Waterfront Access Study and the Alaska Way Viaduct project. Denise Lathrop represents the Commission on the North Waterfront study; and Paul Tomita represents the Commission on the Mayor's Action Committee for the Alaskan Way Viaduct (AWV). The full Commission recently had a briefing on the AWV, and are involved in a series of working sessions with SDC, the City and consultants to look more closely at planning and design issues.

Chris Rogers and Megan Kagen from the Seattle Art Museum's (SAM) Capital Projects presented an overview of the Sculpture Park Project, outlining the project scope and timeline, and identifying planning related issues. The Sculpture Park is in partnership since 1998 with the Trust for Public Lands. The site had been a Unical Site, with negotiations beginning in 1999. Myrtle Edwards Park has a constituency of 450,000 users/year and provided a built-in constituency for the Sculpture Park siting. Land assembly was done by partnership with the City and County. There has been community concern about north waterfront access and the proposed overpass, car, transit and pedestrian conflicts. The Park is hoping to become partners with the Potlatch Trail project in creating

a waterfront connection. View corridors will be preserved and enhanced, land bridges will connect the parcels in a zigzag design allowing for the creation of garden precincts and planted with all native species. The Park is proposing to build a small jetty, creating a beach area terraced to the water. Portions of the seawall would be removed in this spot. Existing surface parking spots and the trolley barn will be removed. Underground parking will be provided under the pavilion, accommodating 50-70 spaces.

The concept design will be unveiled on May 14<sup>th</sup> at SAM. The three parcels will be connected with landbridges open to the public, but closed off at night. Of key concern is construction timing with the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The project is breaking ground in 2003, with anticipated completion in 2006.

### **Reorganization and Council Briefing**

Councilmember Richard Conlin is developing an amendment that seeks to maintain the Commission's staffing and autonomy, he briefed the Commission on it's content:

1. Affirm the Commission's independence in enabling legislation.
2. The Commission would retain it's dedicated line of business and staffing.
3. The Commission would retain 2.5 FTE (down from it's current 3.0 FTE).
4. Current 2.5 positions would be transferred.
5. Provision for Planning Commission involvement with hiring of the DCLU Director position.
6. Dedicated line of business of \$16,000.

Relating to the Comprehensive Plan:

1. The Commission would retain stewardship of the Comprehensive Plan within DCLU.
2. There would be an increase of 1.5 FTE for the Comprehensive Plan unit within DCLU.
3. The Comprehensive Plan would be a dedicated line-of-business within DCLU.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

### **WRAP UP: CONCLUSIONS AND KEY ISSUES**

The Commission is in full support of Councilmember Richard Conlin's amended proposal. Commissioners will contact other Councilmembers, urging support of Conlin's amendment and will schedule a meeting with Diane Sugimura as soon as the dust settles to discuss Planning Commission relationship with DCLU's planning unit.

Commissioners will be invited to the Sculpture Park's Concept Design unveiling on May 14. The Commission will follow closely the timing issue with the Alaskan Way Viaduct and view corridor issues, and will have a follow-up briefing later in the year.

Commissioners expressed strong support to be included in the Get Engaged: the City Boards and Commissions program for the second year where regulatory commissions are being added. Alex



Field will move forward and add the Planning Commission to the list, checking back in later in the process.

**ADJOURN**

Vice-Chair Matthew Kitchen adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

**NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, April 25, 2002

7:30-9:30 a.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221.



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

#### FINAL MINUTES

**April 25, 2002**

**Approved May 9, 2002**

**Commissioners Present:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Lyn Krizanich, Denise Lathrop, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, Paul Tomita, Val Thomas

**Commissioners Absent:** Gregory Davis, Phil Olbrechts

**Staff Present:** Susanne Friedman and Susan McLain

**Guests Present:**

Maggie Morris, Evans School of Public Affairs student; Cynthia Parker, Director of the Seattle Office of Housing

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 7:37 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the April 11, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Chuck Weinstock made several announcements about upcoming meetings and events.

**The Commission's Affordable Housing Committee Meeting will meet next Tuesday, April 30, 7:30 - 9:00a.m.**

Jory Phillips and Diane Sugimura, Director of DCLU, will update the committee on DCLU's response to the letter the Commission recently sent regarding housing production and affordability.

**Housing Levy**

The public hearing for the housing levy will be held on May 6, 2002 at 5:00p.m.

**Planning Commission 2002 Retreat**

Matthew Kitchen volunteered to chair the planning committee for the Commission's retreat, which is tentatively scheduled for two consecutive Thursday evenings. In response to Chuck Weinstock's request for additional committee members to work with Matthew, John Owen and Denise Lathrop volunteered.

**Tentative dates are:**

May 23<sup>rd</sup> 4:30-9:00p.m.

May 30<sup>th</sup> 4:30-9:00p.m.

### **Update on the Planning Re-organization**

Chair Chuck Weinstock summarized the City Council's April 15, 2002 decision regarding the reorganization of the City's planning functions as a "Major Accomplishment" for the Commission. Council Member Conlin's revised ordinance, which contained changes in the status and staffing for the Planning Commission, was discussed and subsequently approved by the City Council. He reported that the Council suspended the rules to hear from the Planning Commission Chair. Chair Weinstock reported to the Council that the Commission was satisfied with the revised proposal overall, emphasizing the importance of the Commission retaining authority for hiring the Commission Director and maintaining an independent advisory voice.

The decision includes the following elements:

- The Planning Commission retains its independence in that it "is able to respond to requests and provide advice to the Mayor and/or Council at its discretion" (Ordinance \_\_\_\_)
- Planning Commission staff will be employed by DCLU, but the Commission will participate in the selection of staff and retain approval authority with respect to the selection and assignment of the Planning Commission Director.
- The Planning Commission will become a separate line of business within DCLU.
- Two FTE staff (Executive Director and Planning Commission Analyst) will be transferred directly to DCLU.
- The Planning Commission's administrative budget will be reduced accordingly.
- DCLU will provide administrative assistance for the Planning Commission; DCLU and other departments will provide technical assistance as needed to the Commission.

Chair Weinstock outlined several challenges facing the Commission since the reorganization. Independent advice can be a double-edged sword, especially if the advice being given is controversial. The question of "what does the Commission do?" came up during this process, revealing the need for the Commission to be clear in its purpose and actions to elected officials, City departments and the public. The Commission has the challenge of communicating what its role is and how it works within the City. Several ideas came up on how to address these challenges:

1. find ways to "add value" (and show how the Commission does this) to the work of City decision-makers
2. have the Council approve the Planning Commission's work program
3. coordinate the Planning Commission's work plan with OPM and DCLU's work programs
4. develop regular ways to communicate with the Executive

The Commission will be working with DCLU to establish their physical and functional relationship, including administrative staff support, staff and Commissioner roles within DCLU, and with other departments carrying out planning, establishment of work plan priorities.

Commissioner Val Thomas voiced his appreciation for the work staff and Commissioners played in the reorganization discussion. He stated that dovetailing the Commission's work plan with that of the Mayor and Council could help build bridges between the Commission and elected officials. Chair Weinstock observed that the Commission will need to balance its work plan between larger, more visible issues that are of interest to the Mayor and Council, and smaller, independent issues that are of interest to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen commented that tasks over the next few months associated with the reorganization will differ from the Commission's longer-term work program. Commissioner George Blomberg stated his support for finding complementary and collaborative work with DCLU. Commissioner John Owen stated his enthusiasm about the changes in DCLU, including taking on stewardship and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, noting the Commission can play an important role in shaping this. Commissioners Denise Lathrop and Mimi Sheridan stressed the

importance of championing the Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plans. Mimi Sheridan voiced concern about the possible demise of the Neighborhood Plans and urged the Commission to stay on top of this.

**Monorail Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Discussion**

(Commission ETC DEIS review committee: George Blomberg, Matthew Kitchen, Lyn Krizanich, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Paul Tomita)

Commissioner John Owen gave a brief overview of the Monorail programmatic DEIS, stating the subcommittee's belief that the DEIS is "thin on substance". He noted that it does not do an adequate job of identifying and providing a thorough analysis of impacts. The DEIS does not provide sufficient information about the system itself, which as a result will hinder its usefulness as a decisionmaking tool for the ETC, the City and voters. Owen stated that the Commission's DEIS review committee is developing specific comments on the DEIS. They also propose to identify several larger issues in the Commission's letter with a request that these be addressed. For example, the Commission would like to see more discussion about the relationship between the overall public benefits and costs (monetary and community impacts) of the system.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan noted that no analysis of the route along 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Avenues was presented in the DEIS. Chair Chuck Weinstock asked if this is due to oversight on the part of the ETC or if it is intentional. Commissioner Lyn Krizanich outlined the concerns she heard expressed by Belltown residents at the April 23 DEIS public hearing. They are concerned about the impacts on that community that would occur if the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue route is selected. Commissioner Krizanich expressed concern that the broader issues about overall downtown impacts may be overshadowed by the debate between a 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment.

The Commission's Monorail DEIS review committee will complete draft comments and send them to the Commission via email. The comments are due May 6, 2002.

**PRESENTATION/ DISCUSSION: PROPOSED HOUSING LEVY**

Cynthia Parker, Director, Office of Housing; Chuck Weinstock, Planning Commission

Chair Chuck Weinstock provided a brief of the City's housing levies in the 1980s and 90s. He noted that the 1986 levy was \$50 million; the 1995 levy was \$59 million over five years. The proposed 2002 Housing Levy will ask voters to approve \$95 million over six years and includes money for emergency housing assistance that was formerly funded through the City's General Fund. He explained that a loss of federal and state funding for housing in recent years has resulted in some additional categories in the levy. Weinstock then described the composition and directive of the levy Citizens Advisory Board, and noted that Mayor Nickels is supportive of the levy. The City Council will vote on the levy in late May and early June; it is proposed for the November ballot.

Cynthia Parker, Director, Office of Housing, outlined the City's citizen outreach efforts to gain feedback on the design of the levy. She noted the importance of the City of Seattle serving as a catalyst for other sources of funding. She then outlined the new and increased elements of the 2002 levy: increased emphasis on home ownership and rental production; encouraging mixed use development that meets neighborhood development goals; and transfer of the Emergency Housing Payments from the City's General Fund to the levy in order to provide more stability for this service.

Commissioner John Owen suggested the Office of Housing develop a Q&A sheet for basic questions about the levy. Commissioner Kitchen asked if the Chamber of Commerce has received a presentation from OH. Cynthia Parker responded that they have briefed the Chamber and it is very supportive of the levy. Commissioner Denise Lathrop suggested that educational materials be made

available to neighborhood plan stewardship groups because many neighborhood plans cite the need for affordable housing. Commissioner Weinstock suggested the Commission Affordable Housing Committee sponsor a viewing of the informative Powerpoint presentation created by the OH.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen asked if the Citizens Advisory Board discussed different approaches that City government could take to serve the city's housing needs. Cynthia Parker described some of the lessons learned from past levies and their assessment of needs within the city. Chair Weinstock explained the challenge of balancing critical housing demand and preventing homelessness. Commissioner Kitchen observed that the Neighborhood Housing Opportunity Fund does not serve either of these needs. Chair Weinstock responded that the Opportunity Fund will impact the overall market for housing by focusing on a variety of needs.

Commissioner George Blomberg suggested that the City should ensure that the Comprehensive Plan's Housing Goals and Policies support the goals of the levy. Cynthia Parker said the Comprehensive Plan's housing element currently is too prescriptive. Chair Chuck Weinstock closed the discussion by noting the challenge of convincing voters to approve an additional tax burden this fall in light of the many transportation proposals on the ballot.

#### **NEXT STEPS AND ACTIONS**

##### **HOUSING LEVY**

- Commissioners agreed to have the Commission draft a letter in support of the levy to be sent to City Council
- They also asked the Affordable Housing Committee to consider writing a letter to the editors of the local newspapers supporting the levy

##### **ETC**

- Commissioners asked staff and the ETC subcommittee to ensure that the Planning Commission is kept up to date and involved in the issues related to the Elevated Transportation Company's DEIS.

##### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

##### **ADJOURN**

Chair Chuck Weinstock adjourned the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

##### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday May 9

3:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Room 221 Municipal Building



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES May 9, 2002 Approved June 13, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Gregory Davis, Lyn Krizanich, Denise Lathrop, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, Val Thomas and Paul Tomita

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Linda Stalzer and Chuck Weinstock,

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman and Susan McLain

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Elaine Ko, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Richard Conlin  
Stephanie Pure, Legislative Aide to Peter Steinbrueck  
Yvonne Sanchez, Director, Department of Neighborhoods  
Phyllis Shulman, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Richard Conlin

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chair Matthew Kitchen called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the April 25, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously as written.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

**Commission 2002 Leadership and Recruitment**

Vice-Chair Matthew Kitchen announced that Chair Chuck Weinstock will be leaving the Commission in June due to his commitment of time to the Housing Levy campaign. Commissioner Denise Lathrop reported that the Nominating Committee will submit its formal nominations report at the annual retreat on May 23, 2002. Commissioners will then vote on the nominations on May 30.

Marty Curry reported that Phil Olbrechts has indicated his need to resign from the Commission due to work demands. This will bring the Commission to four vacancies. Alex Field is working with the Mayor's Office and the Commission to fill these vacancies. We hope to have at least two new appointees before the retreat.

**City Neighborhoods Council Meeting, April 29**

Director Marty Curry gave a recap of the presentation and discussion with the CNC meeting on April 29. In response to the CNC's invitation to give an update on the SPC's status, Chair

Chuck Weinstock gave a summary of the results of the reorganization for the Planning Commission, the elimination of the Strategic Planning Commission, and moving planning functions to DCLU and Seattle Transportation and the creation of the Office of Policy and Management. CNC members voiced their support for the Commission's continuing independent voice and role in City planning issues.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Vice-Chair Matthew Kitchen noted two upcoming events of interest to Commissioners.

#### **Sculpture Park Model and Design Unveiling.**

This is scheduled to be held on

May 14, SAM 12:00 - the location has been changed to Town Hall.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Publication and SPC letter**

Council's Transportation Committee will be briefed on the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape Project on June 4, 2002. The Planning Commission will submit its letter commenting on the final report prior to the briefing.

### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

#### **Planning Commission Retreat Update**

Vice-Chair Matthew Kitchen gave a brief update on the planning for the Commission's annual retreat. The retreat is being held on May 23 and May 30, with both sessions in the late afternoon/evening. Commissioner George Bloomberg graciously offered the use of Pier 69 for the first session. Staff will provide up-to-date information on the City's planning reorganization and Acting DCLU Director Diane Sugimura will attend the first session to discuss DCLU/planning reorganization. Several guests may be invited to the second session to provide outside and historical perspectives on the Commission's role and how to maximize its effectiveness.

#### **Alaskan Way Viaduct Project**

Commissioner Paul Tomita summarized the two options discussed at the last combined Planning Commission/Design Commission session. The first option emphasizes transportation; the second emphasizes open space as organizing concepts. The open space concept would accommodate the same amount of vehicular traffic but consolidate open space into a significant green swath along the waterfront.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted that this is an unusual draft EIS process since it parallels the design work. He also pointed out that the State needs to replace the existing vehicular capacity, which limits the engineering and design options. While the overall concept for the waterfront design will be part of the EIS options, the City's planning will occur over a 10-year period. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan clarified that consultants will be working on the draft EIS between now and December, but that a 'snap shot' will set in place in June, on which the EIS will be based. Commissioner Lyn Krizanich asked for clarification on the various options and seawall reconstruction.

Commissioner John Owen stressed the need to voice the Commission's concern about the lack of comprehensive, strategic transportation planning in the City and the need to clarify transportation goals as they apply to this major project. Commissioner Paul Tomita stated that broad planning goals for the area need to be articulated now, and the City needs to step up to the plate in developing these. Such goals would provide a framework for a more comprehensive waterfront master planning process over the next few years. Tomita reiterated the opinion voiced by many that this is an important opportunity to plan for the future of the waterfront.

Legislative Aid, Phyllis Shulman updated the Commission with the latest dates on the Council's calendar for the project. The Council will hold two Council of the Whole meetings in July and September, 2002. She encouraged the Commission to suggest to Council what questions should be asked in these briefings.

**ETC Draft EIS Comment Letter: Commission Discussion/Approval**

Susan McLain and staff presented the Commission's draft letter to the Elevated Transit Company (ETC) on the Monorail Project's Draft EIS. Matthew Kitchen stated that the letter reflects significant criticism about the inadequacy of the draft EIS in analyzing key benefits and costs of the system. Commissioners voiced the need to talk directly with ETC staff about the concerns raised in its letter. Matthew Kitchen also noted that a separate letter should be developed addressing broader concerns and recommendations about the planning and public process that have been raised by the Commission.

In the ensuing discussion Commissioners confirmed their desire that the Commission present its comments and recommendations constructively. Val Thomas asked that the letter clarify that the Commission's criticisms of the DEIS do not reflect a lack of endorsement of the monorail. Rather these comments are offered as constructive advice regarding the importance of careful analysis and more complete information in order for elected officials and voters to make an informed decision, and in order for this measure to be approved. Commissioners noted that the short planning timeframe is problematic for response to their comments. However, it was pointed out that more in depth information is available on the ETC Web site than is included in the draft EIS. Inclusion of this information and analyses in the FEIS might address some of their comments.

Commissioner John Owen stressed that there does not seem to be a public forum for getting critical issues aired in an open manner. The Monorail project description makes an assumption that this (the monorail proposal) is a good thing, but the DEIS does not really confirm this through its analysis. The draft EIS needs to provide a clear argument for the monorail project. The assumption is that this is a good thing to do; however, the EIS doesn't really lead one to this conclusion. Mimi Sheridan pointed out that an EIS should be neutral but should identify and analyze specific transportation benefits relative to costs and impacts. These analyses should include addressing the difference of impacts between downtown areas and less densely developed areas. John Owen added that more detailed information regarding the differential impacts of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave vs. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave route options is critical to making decisions about the monorail through the downtown.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop stressed the need to link critical transportation decisions back to the Comprehensive Plan and the City's broader transportation plans. A programmatic EIS



has planning level data rather than project level information. However, Commissioner Lyn Krizanich pointed out that there is no weighted consideration given to routing options, nor scrutiny given to ridership numbers. She also pointed out that there was no discussion, comparison or information in the draft EIS on two-car vs. four-car operations. This has a major impact on infrastructure, future capacity, costs, mitigation impacts, scale, scope and the power system - not a small thing to overlook. It also would have a significant impact on station design, traffic flow and neighborhood development and access. She suggested that the Commission get transcripts of public hearing testimony on route related questions and offered to review this to ensure that the most important questions raised in that forum are addressed.

Commissioners discussed their next steps, particularly the Commission's role with regard to the ETC project in coming months. Commissioner Val Thomas suggested the Commission seek input from the Mayor and Council regarding whether this should be a continuing work program item for the Commission. Several other Commissioners pointed out the importance of this project and the high level of interest on the Commission to provide a reasoned voice in how to ensure this proposed project serves the City and community's overall transportation goals and needs. Phyllis Shulman, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Conlin, encouraged the Commission to clarify what the critical questions are, what is missing and how to get what is needed. Commissioner Paul Tomita noted that the Commission's continued involvement should depend on the effectiveness of its comments on the DEIS in producing a more informed document and discussion on the proposed project. Susan McLain suggested the Commission identify its broad questions and recommend actions.

#### **Conclusions/Actions:**

- Planning Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the draft letter for submittal to the ETC with minor edits reflecting their discussion today.
- Representatives from the Ad Hoc ETC EIS Committee will have a follow up discussion with the ETC staff.
- The Ad Hoc committee will meet again to discuss broader issues to be put into a letter or series of questions in a public open letter addressing the bigger picture
- Staff will schedule a meeting with Grace Crunican, Director, and Susan Sanchez, Planning Director, Seattle Transportation, to discuss identified planning policy issues related to the monorail project.

#### **INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION**

##### **YVONNE SANCHEZ**

Commissioner Denise Lathrop welcomed Yvonne Sanchez, Director, Department of Neighborhoods (DON), to the Commission and asked her to share her background, goals and approach to directing DON. She also asked Ms. Sanchez to discuss what she sees as key priorities in the future of neighborhood plan implementation.

Ms. Sanchez provided a brief but interesting account of her background, which has included interest and work on environmental issues, social issues and community building. She stated that neighborhood plans do need to happen and that this will be an important priority for DON. She is aware that there will be a need for additional planning in some areas. Ms. Sanchez reported that she is suggesting that a cabinet-level interdepartmental team be established to resolve timing and policy issues related to neighborhood plan implementation.

She also expressed the need to link the plans back to the Comprehensive Plan in a cohesive manner.

Ms. Sanchez acknowledged that the budget situation will require DON to look at different ways of doing business with fewer resources. They are examining ways to consolidate some of the work of the neighborhood service center managers and neighborhood development managers, while recognizing that they do play different roles.

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich voiced her concerns, echoed by Commissioners Darryl Smith and Denise Lathrop, about the effectiveness of the Neighborhood Plan Implementation Committee (NPAIC). Darryl Smith emphasized the importance of supporting the capacity of neighborhood plan stewardship groups and encouraged Ms. Sanchez to consider the recommendations in the Commission's Stewardship Survey Report (2001). She agreed to do this and noted that she has already found the Commission's work on citizen participation and plan stewardship useful.

In response to Commissioner questions about the Mayor's interest in race relations, Ms. Sanchez talked about building on DON's work with neighborhoods to help more people engage in the civil process. She is interested in the potential to find ways to bring the immigrant populations into neighborhood planning. Ms. Sanchez noted that the map of Neighborhood Matching Fund projects shows that there are fewer projects in parts of Southeast and Northeast Seattle where lower income and immigrant populations live. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan suggested that not only location but types of projects and who has been involved would be useful to examine.

Finally, Ms. Sanchez noted that the addition of the Office for Education in DON will add capacity in finding ways to involve youth in DON's projects and programs. She briefly mentioned the Communities that Care initiative which will focus on involving youth.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop thanked Ms. Sanchez for joining the Commission and expressed their interest in continuing to work with DON on neighborhood planning related issues.

#### **CONCLUSIONS/ACTIONS:**

- Commissioners asked staff to prepare a letter to DON expressing the importance of, and their support of, the Neighborhood Development Manager and the Neighborhood Service Center Manager functions.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

#### **ADJOURN**

#### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, June 13, 2002

3:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES JUNE 13, 2002 APPROVED JULY 25, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Chuck Weinstock, Chair; Matthew Kitchen, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Lyn Krizanich, Denise Lathrop, John Owen, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith and Linda Stalzer

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Gregory Davis, Val Thomas and Paul Tomita

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry, Susanne Friedman, and Susan McLain

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Jeanne Krikawa

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chuck Weinstock called the meeting to order at 3:13PM.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the May 9, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously as written.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

##### **Commissioner Recruitment**

Director Marty Curry reported that the Commission has several candidates who have interviewed, or will be interviewing, for the four open positions: Jeanne Krikawa, Grace Chien, Fritz Wagoner, Anjali Bhagat and Steve Sheehy. The Commission will also be interviewing candidates from the YMCA Youth on Boards and Commissions program later this month. She also asked for experienced Commissioners to participate in new Commissioner Orientation, which will be scheduled later this month, pending the Mayor's candidate selection.

##### **Planning Commission Move to DCLU/Key Tower**

Planning Commission staff moved to Key Tower last week along with the other members of the new Planning Division from the remnants of the Strategic Planning Office. Staff are now located on the 19<sup>th</sup> Floor of Key Tower in a temporary configuration until the entire planning unit can be integrated on one floor.

##### **Guide to Public Participation**

Marty Curry reported that on June 3, she and intern Patricia Julio briefed the City Council on the Guide to Public Participation. This project came out of the Commission's recommendations in Evaluation of Citizen Participation (published in 2000), and has involved an interdepartmental team staffed by Patricia. Council gave an enthusiastic endorsement of the usefulness of the guide. Kudos

to Patricia Julio, the Commission's intern, who worked with Director Marty Curry and an Interdepartmental Team to put this together.

### **Northgate 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Street Design Report**

Another successful Council briefing was held at the Council's Transportation Committee. Thanks to Commissioner Lyn Krizanich for sharing the Commission's support and response to the project. Both Council and the Mayor have indicated appreciation for finally seeing some tangible improvements and have voiced support for moving forward with the plan. Kudos to Susanne Friedman and Commissioners George Blomberg, John Owen, Lyn Krizanich, Paul Tomita and ex-Commissioner Mel Streeter for all their work and guidance on this project over the past year.

### **ETC -- Monorail**

The Commission's ETC committee is working on an issue paper that focuses on planning issues to be considered by the City as it works with the ETC on the monorail project. This follows two position papers that have been completed by the joint SDC/SPC committee. Commissioners reiterated their concerns regarding thorough analysis and public discussion about the monorail's effect on the city's transportation system and community impacts and how they will be mitigated. Commissioner Lyn Krizanich reported that the ETC has architectural design models available for public review and requested that the Commission view these along with revised ridership numbers.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **Alaskan Way Viaduct Open House**

There will be a public open house on Monday, June 17, 2002 at the Seattle Center's Rainier Room, from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

#### **Nominating Committee Report: Commission Vote**

Commissioner Denise Lathrop asked for any final nominations from the floor to the Nominating Committee report, first given at the May 23 Commission Retreat. There were no additional nominations, so she asked for a vote on the Nominating Committee's recommended slate. The proposed slate was moved, seconded and passed unanimously. New officers voted for the 2002-03 year are: John Owen, Commission Chair; Denise Lathrop, Vice-chair; Linda Stalzer, Executive Committee At-large Representative. The remaining Executive Committee positions consist of committee chairs: Paul Tomita, Transportation; Lyn Krizanich, Urban Centers; Val Thomas, Affordable Housing; and Darryl Smith, Neighborhoods. Outgoing Chair Chuck Weinstock voiced the Commission's thanks to John Owen for donning the gown and gavel. Several Commissioners thanked Chair Chuck Weinstock for his leadership over the past year, particularly during the reorganization.

#### **Commission Roles and Functions: Commission Discussion**

Commissioner Denise Lathrop facilitated a discussion on the draft proposal for the Commission's roles and functions. This document was a product of the Commission's Annual Retreat and will be used to guide the Commission's activities. Commissioners voiced their concurrence with the roles and functions as proposed, and suggested several changes, revolving mostly around wording. Mimi Sheridan suggested that item #2 be more generic and include the term "tools." John Owen and George Blomberg suggested replacing evaluation with review and assessment on #4 (annual status of planning). With these minor changes, the Commission Roles and Functions were approved by unanimous vote. Chair Chuck Weinstock noted that the Commission can and should review these roles periodically to make adjustments as needed, including future work with DCLU planning staff on the shape and focus of the planning function in DCLU.

**Action:**

The Commissions Roles and Functions were approved as “Proposed” with minor changes.

**Reorganization Update**

In response to questions from Commissioners, Director Marty Curry gave a brief update on how the new planning unit was functioning and possible areas of opportunity for the Commission’s input and direction. She noted that Acting Director Diane Sugimura has expressed interest in involving the Commission in upcoming work in shaping the new planning functions.

Commissioner Linda Stalzer gave a brief update on the director search for DCLU, stating that two additional candidates were interviewed, but one has withdrawn and the other was not recommended to the Mayor. The Mayor’s Office is authorizing a targeted search, although the exact focus of this is not known.

**Criteria for Evaluating SPC Work Tasks**

Commissioner John Owen facilitated the discussion on Criteria for Evaluating SPC Work Tasks, a product of the recent Planning Commission Retreat. He reminded Commissioners that the purpose of the criteria is to be a screening device for accepting or rejecting potential work plan issues and projects that come to the Commission. It would also help define the parameters of the Commission’s role, length of involvement and deliverables.

Commission Chair Chuck Weinstock pointed out the goal is that not everything will fit through the screen, and that it is a way to focus on the most appropriate items and not try to do everything that comes up. The issue of setting “pre-conditions” beforehand produced a lively discussion. Commissioners were enthusiastic about the types and parameters of their involvement in projects, particularly as a way to set clear expectations for themselves and others and to identify specific end dates or assessment points for projects and activities.

**Action:**

The Commission unanimously approved the Criteria with a few edits. The Executive Committee will apply the approved criteria to the Commission’s 2002 work plan and 2003-04 budget proposal at their next meeting.

**Meeting with the Mayor**

In response to Director Marty Curry’s suggestion that the Commission seek a meeting with Mayor Nickels, Commissioners asked staff to invite him to a regular Commission meeting in August or September. By then the DCLU reorganization will be further defined and the Commission will have had an opportunity to delineate its position on several key transportation policy issues.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Chuck Weinstock at 5:15 p.m.

**NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, June 27, 2002  
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.  
Municipal Building, Room 221



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES JUNE 27, 2002 APPROVED JULY 25, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Denise Lathrop, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Gregory Davis, Mimi Sheridan, Val Thomas, Chuck Weinstock

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Matthew Kitchen, Lyn Krizanich, John Owen, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, and Paul Tomita

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry and Susanne Friedman

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Lish Whitson, Michael Stanger, Tom Hauger, DCLU; Jeanne Krikawa,

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Denise Lathrop called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the June 13, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

##### **Commissioner Recruitment**

Director Marty Curry reported that several candidates have interviewed for the four open positions: Jeanne Krikawa, Grace Chien, Fritz Wagoner, Angilie Bhagat and Steve Sheehy. The Commission will also be interviewing candidates from the YMCA Youth on Boards and Commissions program later this month. Commissioner recommendations will be sent to the Mayor's office next week for his approval.

##### **2003-04 Budget; Reorganization**

Director Marty Curry gave an up date on the latest budget news. The newly created Planning Department will not lose any staff, but may not be able to fill two of the transferred positions due to budget reductions. The Commission's actual budget allocation is still unclear, given the reductions to the Planning Commission and planning functions transferred to DCLU.

##### **Meeting with the Mayor**

The Commission will be requesting a meeting with the Mayor as soon as he has made appointments for the Commission vacancies. We are proposing one of our meetings in September. Once we have a time scheduled, we will work with the Executive Committee to develop an agenda.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Elevated Transit Company (ETC) Open House**

The ETC is holding a public hearing Tuesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> on the latest version of the Popular Transit Plan. [http://www.elevated.org/project/draft\\_sptp.shtm](http://www.elevated.org/project/draft_sptp.shtm)

Director Marty Curry reported on a meeting she and Commissioners Paul Tomita and John Owen had last week with Councilmember Richard Conlin. He has requested Commission assistance in planning a public forum on the monorail proposal to be held in mid July. Councilmember Conlin asked if SPC would co-sponsor the forum, along with other organizations, the City Council and Executive. The purpose of the forum would be to provide an opportunity for the City Council to have a dialogue with citizens on their issues related to the ETC proposal as prior to their vote on putting this on the fall ballot.

## **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PLAN**

Vice Chair Denise Lathrop gave an overview of the Executive Committee's approach to the Commission's work plan and their application and discussion of the selection criteria. Staff Susanne Friedman introduced a list of items from the City Council and Executive work plans for the coming year that address planning issues within the City for Commissioner consideration.

Ms. Lathrop facilitated a Commission review of key work plan items. Marty Curry noted that staff will coordinate with Acting DCLU Director Diane Sugimura in bringing Commissioners into upcoming work to develop a framework for planning in DCLU, including the Commission's role.

In reference to the Comprehensive Plan, the Commission will assist DCLU's staff in the Monitoring Report and the Case Studies (see agenda item below for further discussion) in the coming months. It will also continue to work with DCLU staff to develop a User's Guide. In 2003, as part of the Comp Plan Update, the Commission will work with DCLU to assess the need for revamping or revising the Comprehensive Plan. Chuck Weinstock pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan is a policy document, and that some of the more detailed information is not appropriate in this document. For example, the Housing Element contains very detailed guidance, more appropriate for the Consolidated Plan. Commissioner Gregory Davis pointed out that non-profit organizations often find it helpful to be able to reference specific, detailed policies in the Comp Plan for their grant proposals.

Commissioner George Blomberg urged the Commission to add the Shoreline Master Plan to its work plan and to not lose sight of its relevance in the Comp Plan. The Transportation Committee will take the lead with Grace Crunican and SDOT in identifying key policy direction from the Comp Plan and getting specific transportation programs in line with that policy direction.

### **Action:**

- Staff will make minor revisions and develop Committee work plans, drawing items from the overall work plan. More detail will be added as information is available on specific timelines for some work items.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MONITORING REPORT CASE STUDIES**

Tom Hauger, Lish Whitson, and Michael Stanger, DCLU Comprehensive Plan staff, joined the Commission to present an update on the Case Studies they are carrying out as part of the Comprehensive Plan Monitoring Report, and to ask for Commission involvement. Lish Whitson reported that there were currently 30 items that they were tracking over time. More details will be forthcoming with the census data - geographic detail at the neighborhood planning level.

The Case Studies will provide a status report on selected neighborhoods, focusing on growth and its effects since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plans. Tom Hauger noted that these Case Studies may be a launching pad for potential Comp Plan revisions as the City responds to new growth targets assigned by the State to all urban areas. The Case Studies will seek to measure changes in livability based on the neighborhood plan goals, Comp Plan policies and implementation of neighborhood plans. They will measure the types and amount of growth that have taken place and the extent of public facilities built. Michael Stanger has been identifying key issues from the Neighborhood Plans to use as indicators and gave the Commission a preliminary handout in the form of a scorecard with this base information; he also outlined a rough timeline for information gathering.

Commissioners gave initial feedback on the scorecard in general and some more specific input on the goals and policies. Several Commissioners felt that items that were marked as not easily quantifiable could be quantified with simple parameters and gave examples of some of these.

The DCLU team also asked for Commissioners' help in developing the public process for the project, and advice on the project timeline, key questions to be addressed. They also want the Commission to review the draft and final documents. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan offered to send them more specific suggestions on indicators and also agreed to send names of community people that might be interviewed early in the project. Chuck Weinstock stressed the need for balanced focus groups and suggested that input from the Sector Managers is critical in developing the project.

Given the timeframe and the summer season, Vice Chair, Denise Lathrop suggested that one-on-one interviews with community members take place in July/August. Commissioner Val Thomas pointed out that the Commission identified and interviewed neighborhood plan stewards as part of their Stewardship Survey in 2001 and offered this as a resource.

Commissioner Chuck Weinstock voiced his support for the Case Studies, but also cautioned the team about prematurely drawing conclusions about initial data on the neighborhoods. He also suggested that the team look at housing uses (e.g. doubling up versus new housing produced), and job growth. He also recommended talking with the investor community - looking forward and back for trends and factors in growth.

In closing Commissioners Val Thomas, Mimi Sheridan, Gregory Davis, Denise Lathrop and visitor Jeanne Krikawa volunteered to assist DCLU staff with the Report. Commission and DCLU staff agreed to meet to map out a preliminary schedule and identify citizens for initial contact.

### **Action:**

- The Planning Commission will convene a brownbag lunch work session, inviting the Neighborhood Development Managers and DCLU staff to have further develop the Case Study project.



- The Planning Commission will form an adhoc committee to assist DCLU staff in identifying framing questions for the case studies and assist in reviewing the report at various intervals. The adhoc committee will begin immediately and will be dissolved in November/December when the report is published. Commissioners include: Mimi Sheridan, Gregory Davis, Val Thomas, Denise Lathrop and Jeanne Krikawa.
- The Commission will assist in recommending appropriate public process techniques for gathering information, suggest possible citizens to participate in interviews and forums, and will take a major role in conducting small focus groups in September.

#### **Timeline for Case Study Project**

<b>Late August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Late September/October</b>	<b>November</b>
1 on 1		Possible	Final
Interviews	Focus Groups	Report Draft	Report Draft
Community Report Back			

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

#### **Farewell to Chuck Weinstock**

Commissioners paid tribute to Chuck's 5 ½ years with the Planning Commission, to his leadership, keen sense of humor and great ability to help us look at the big picture. He is resigning six months early due to his involvement in the Housing Levy campaign. Thank you Chuck!

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Vice Chair Denise Lathrop at 9:15 a.m.

#### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, July 11, 2002

3:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221

*Copies of the Planning Commission Minutes are available by calling 684-0433.*



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES JULY 11, 2002 APPROVED JULY 25, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** John Owen, chair; Lyn Krizanich, Darryl Smith, Gregory Davis, Mimi Sheridan, Val Thomas,

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** George Blomberg, Matthew Kitchen, Denise Lathrop, Linda Stalzer and Paul Tomita,

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry and Susanne Friedman

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Councilmember Nick Licata, John Rahaim, Robert Scully, CityDesign; Chris Leman

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

John Owen called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the June 13 and June 27, 2002 Planning Commission meetings were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

**Commissioner Recruitment:** Director Marty Curry reported that Alex Field, Boards and Commissions Administrator will meet with Mayor Nickels Friday, July 12 to get his approval of Commission appointees. Once approved, the package will go to City Council and are scheduled for confirmation at Councilmember Judy Nicastro's Land Use Committee on August 6, 2001. New members would begin at the first Commission meeting in September.

Staff Susanne Friedman reported that one person has been interviewed for the Youth position, with two more interviews to be scheduled the last week in July. The recommended youth member will also be confirmed by Council and begin to serve in September, 2002.

#### **Staff Recruiting Status and Process:**

Marty Curry reported that the Commission had to request a waiver from the hiring freeze to fill the Planning Analyst position being vacated by Susanne Friedman. Word has been received that the waiver has been denied. DCLU Acting Director Diane Sugimura is following up with the Mayor's office, since this appears to rescind the recent reorganization which confirmed and retained two full time positions to staff the Planning Commission. The Executive Committee will take the lead in determining the Commission's response and potential action regarding this matter.

**Farewell to Susanne Friedman:**

Chair John Owen, on behalf of the Commission, thanked Susanne for her almost five years of working in various capacities for the Planning Commission. Other Commissioners and Director Marty Curry voiced her thanks to Susanne for the excellent staff support she has provided, including her most recent work on the Fifth Avenue NE Street Design project. Susanne has taken a position as a project manager in the Parks Department and will be working on Pro Parks Levy projects. All acknowledged that this will give her a great opportunity to work on implementing neighborhood plans!

**Commission Committee Structure: Executive Committee Proposal**

Chair John Owen reported that the Executive Committee is proposing consolidation of several committees in response to our reduced staffing resources and better management of Commission time and energy. Their proposal is for three standing Committees: Executive; Transportation; and Neighborhoods, Housing and Land Use. The latter would consolidate the current Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods and Urban Centers Committees. Ad hoc committees would be used for specific major projects – LRRP, ETC, Viaduct, and others in the future such as South Lake Union or Northgate. It is proposed that Executive continue its twice monthly meetings and that the other committees meet every other month. Commissioners voiced agreement with this more streamlined structure, and to bi-monthly meetings of the two topical committees.

Several Commissioners offered ideas about chair responsibilities. These included assigning chairs to lead on specific topics and sharing or rotating chair responsibilities in the consolidated committee.

**UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Neighborhood Planning: July 18, 12 Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Transportation: July 25, 9:15 – 10:45 a.m. (following the full Commission meeting)

**PROJECT UPDATES**

**ETC -- Public Forum:** The City Council is holding a public forum next Thursday, July 18. The Planning Commission is one of several co-sponsors (also SDC, League of Women Voters, Transportation Choices, Action Better Cities, Allied Arts, and Ballard District Council). Chair John Owen will participate on the panel, which will be moderated by Enrique CERN, a KCTS talk show host.

**ETC -- Update/Discussion at July 25 SPC Meeting:** Marty Curry noted that the Joint SPC/SDC ETC Ad Hoc group will be preparing some issues/questions to guide the update and discussion with ETC at our July 25 Commission meeting. We will get this out to all Commissioners and will ask for revisions. This will follow the July 18 public forum so the discussion will be informed by the results of that meeting.

There are a variety of questions regarding this project that are still being addressed. The ETC Board is scheduled to vote on August 5<sup>th</sup> and will respond to questions in considerations before the board vote wherever possible. Several Commissioners urged that the Planning Commission urge the ETC Board to specifically respond to project impacts.

**Alaskan Way Viaduct:**

Susanne Friedman thanked Commissioners for their input on the Planning and Design Commission's that was just sent to Mayor Nickels and WSDOT Secretary McDonald, voicing concerns about the cost estimates and recommending an alternative approach. Staff will follow up this next week on this with both offices.

Marty Curry reported that she met with three consultants from Urban Design Associates, whom the Executive has hired to do some work on a broader design plan for the Viaduct. They were here earlier this week meeting with a variety of people to get an idea of what issues

**Perspective from Berlin:**

Val Thomas recently visited Berlin and shared with Commissioners some insights on planning and redevelopment activities in this unusual city. He shared photos of some of the redevelopment and noted some important principles that guide development. There is an emphasis on building in the context; every building must have 20% housing; and the area under the elevated rail is enlivened with coffee shops and other small businesses. He noted that there are lessons in cities like this for Seattle and voiced interest in more conversations in the future with Commissioners about some of these lessons.

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

**Center City Open Space Strategy:**

Chair John Owen welcomed John Rahaim, Director, and Robert Scully, staff, from CityDesign.

This project came out of neighborhood planning of the Downtown Urban Centers Planning Group (DUCPG) and their interest in developing an urban design plan for downtown. CityDesign was charged with taking the lead and determined the value of focusing on the open space strategy as a beginning point. A gaps analysis was completed and an urban design forum resulted in developing a comprehensive analysis of open space needs and potential in the downtown/center city community. Commissioners urged CityDesign to think about the overriding idea of how the system should work in the long-term, such as the Green Ring, planned and designed by Olmsted.

The conceptual idea for a Blue Ring includes the waterfront, Jackson St., east 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the Convention Center, and long-term lid of I-5 (north of Denny Way). It was also suggested that the proposal include a hierarchy of streets (green, connector, and core streets) as well as complement projects in the pipeline, such as improving the connection to First Hill, connection to the Sculpture Park, and trails that connect the lake to Elliott Bay and Mountains to Sound Greenway.

**Commission Comments:** Val Thomas stated that this project is an important effort and makes sense. He noted that he continues to see the need to consider additional open space for the growing residential population in the center city, including family-friendly squares in all downtown neighborhoods. John Rahaim noted that there is \$1 million for acquisition of open space in the Pro-Parks levy for Denny Triangle and the same amount for the International District. Val stated that how these funds are used needs to be addressed. John Owen asked if there is strategy for open space management. John Rahaim responded that the Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) is addressing this.

In response to Commission questions, John Rahaim noted that there is an interdepartmental staff team working with them on the strategy, including the Parks Department. There also have been several briefings with a “client” group of department directors at several key points in the project’s progress.

John Rahaim concluded by noting that he and staff will be briefing the City Council on the Proposed Center City Open Space Strategy on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is an informational briefing, and he does not expect action on the strategy until after the budget (December, 2002 or early 2003). He encouraged the Commission to review and provide comments to CityDesign and the Council on the proposed strategy.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chris Leman, representing the Eastlake neighborhood, shared with the Commissioners his concern that the Center City Open Space Strategy does not include Eastlake, which is considered as a Center City neighborhood. He is specifically interested in having the strategy include the property along and under the I-5 freeway as open space to be developed as part of this strategy. He suggested adding a pedestrian and bicycle trail between Newton & Aloha Streets. He is concerned that the neighborhood has been omitted from Center City Open Space Strategy. Chris stated that the strategy is lop-sided, that the boundaries go much further than depicted.

Chris requested that the Commission help with securing ProParks funds for the land underneath I-5, including the Eastlake neighborhood in the Center City Open Space Strategy, and WSDOT approval of a lease. He also asked the Commission's help in advocating for inclusion of Eastlake in the Open Space Strategy.

### **Action:**

- The Commission agreed to analyze the Proposed Center City Open Space Strategy and provide feedback to CityDesign and the City Council.
- The Commission will also follow up on Chris Leman's request for input on his two issues – including Eastlake in the Center City Open Space Strategy and advocating Parks Department to allocate ProParks funds for the I-5 corridor open space improvements.

### **Conversation with Councilmember Nick Licata:**

Chair John Owen welcomed Councilmember Licata and noted that the Commission had invited Councilmember Licata to share his priorities as Chair of the Neighborhoods, Arts and Civil Rights Committee and as Chair of the ETC Ad Hoc Committee.

Councilmember Licata stated that he is trying to hold community meetings every trimester in different areas of Seattle. He has found that to be a valuable way to reach more people and engage them in the work of his committee. He highlighted several key issues that he is focusing on during 2002.

The Sand Point Development Plan -- there are issues between the City, community agencies at Sand Point and the University Washington over continuing community uses such as Pottery Northwest and the Montessori school in Building 5, which is controlled by the University. The broader issue here is keeping Sand Point facilities actively used as was envisioned in the Sand Point Plan.

Neighborhood Design Review – Councilmember Licata is interested in looking at the scope of neighborhood design review to ensure that through this process pedestrian oriented development is encouraged. He also noted that south Wallingford may need more intense design review and additional planning, particularly focusing on view corridors and access to the Lake Union waterfront.

Public Clocks – This is a project with the Seattle Arts Commission with an anticipated design contest to design a clock for downtown, celebrating the numerous clocks that exist in the downtown area. They are working with NBBJ on this project and looking at a site on private property for the clock.

Live-Work Space – Councilmember Licata will be sponsoring a follow-up workshop to look at possible land use code changes to allow more flexibility for live-work space. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan suggested linking live-work to design review since this process considers variances to waive the ground floor retail requirements.

Alaska Way Viaduct – Councilmember Licata voiced his continuing concern about the need to replace the viaduct, noting that he has not seen documentation that clearly articulates the actual risk to the Viaduct if it is not fully replaced.

Monorail – Councilmember Licata noted upcoming events including the Council’s Committee of the Whole meeting on July 15 and August 5<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the Council will vote on the ETC Board’s recommended proposal on August 12 or September 9. He noted that the impact on view corridors is an issue that needs to be addressed. Commissioners noted their involvement in the monorail planning process and encouraged Council to focus on impacts in the downtown of the proposed monorail, and the need for attention to design and good planning of stations and station areas.

Master Transportation Plans – Councilmember Licata is interested in possibly requiring a master transportation plan for large developments (over 5 acres) that would be more thorough than current requirements.

Chair John Owen thanked Councilmember Licata for sharing his priorities and confirmed the Commission’s desire to assist him in planning related issues and projects. Councilmember Licata pledged to consider ways the Planning Commission can contribute to issues he is working on this year.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Owen at 5:40 p.m.

**NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

**Thursday, July 25**

**7:30 – 9:00 a.m.**

Municipal Building, Room 221

*Copies of the Planning Commission Minutes are available by calling 684-0431.*



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES July 25, 2002 Approved September 12, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** John Owen, Chair; Denise Lathrop, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Matthew Kitchen, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Gregory Davis, Lyn Krizanich

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Design Commissioners Jack Mackie, Don Royse, Tory Laughlin Taylor, and David Spiker; City staff Lyle Bicknell, Layne Cubell, Patricia Julio, Ethan Melone, Sara Nelson, Bruce Rips, and Diane Sugimura; Community members Henry Aronson, Jud Marquardt, Folke Nyberg and Steve Sheehy (Planning Commission appointee).

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the June 13, 27 and July 11, 2002 Planning Commission meetings were approved as written.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

**New Commissioners:** Marty Curry introduced Steve Sheehy, one of the Mayor's appointments to the Commission (awaiting Council confirmation in early August). Mr. Sheehy noted his background as an attorney in real estate and land use and stated that he has recently joined Sound Transit's legal staff.

**Follow-Up from July 11 Commission Meeting:** Chair John Owen reminded Commissioners that they agreed to review the Draft Center City Open Space Strategy and urged them to get comments to Marty in the next couple of weeks. She will draft a comment letter for review which will be sent to City Council when finalized.

#### **Committee Updates**

**Neighborhoods, Housing, Urban Centers Committee:** Darryl Smith reported on the July 18 meeting of the newly consolidated Neighborhoods, Housing, and Urban Centers Committee. He noted that they came up with a proposal for how the committee might function to accommodate the focus of what was formerly three committees, including rotating topics and chairing of the meetings.

Marty committed to sending out notes from the meeting with the proposal for input from other members who were not able to attend the meeting.

**Transportation Committee:** Chair Paul Tomita reported that the Committee is meeting today following the Full Commission meeting. They will be joined by Tracy Krawczyk, one of several section managers in the new SDOT Policy, Planning and Major Projects Division to discuss that group's organization and ways the Planning Commission may work with them.

### **PROJECT UPDATES**

**ETC Public Forum:** Chair John Owen thanked Commissioners who attended the Monorail Public Forum last week. He reported that the session raised a lot of issues, many similar to those discussed by both Commissions. Paul Tomita voiced concern that Metro's commitment to maintaining current levels of bus service may not be as firm as assumed by the ETC. John Owen, agreed, noting that discussion with Metro staff indicates their own concern about loss of ridership and their ability to have the revenues needed to current or additional service to augment access to and from the monorail stations.

**Alaskan Way Viaduct:** Commissioner Paul Tomita reported on the July 23 Leadership Group meeting. The WSDOT/City project team presented further refinements on the blended C/D option that is becoming the preferred alternative. He noted that Phase I, estimated to cost \$4 billion, does not include on/off ramps downtown or the Roy St. tunnel, but does include 3 lanes each way. The ramps and Roy St. tunnel would be part of a later phase. Tomita stated that the third lane is needed for merging and blending of traffic, so it may not be possible to reduce the configuration to 2 lanes to save costs. He also noted that the temporary connection at Roy and Mercer is not an insignificant cost (\$2 – 4 million).

Layne Cubell, Design Commission Coordinator, reported that the City Council Committee of the Whole meeting on the Alaska Way Viaduct is not scheduled to meet until late September. The delayed timing gives the Commissions time for additional discussion with staff on the alternative refinements and Commission issues and for an opportunity to meet with Grace Crunican, SDOT Director to explore the issue of the downtown on/off ramps. John Owen asked if any response had been received on the joint letter sent recently by the Planning and Design Commissions. Marty Curry reported that there has been no response and that she and Design Commission staff will seek a meeting with City and WSDOT representatives to discuss the Commissions' concerns.

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

**ETC/Monorail Project Update/Discussion:** Chair John Owen welcomed ETC representatives Harold Robertson, Executive Director; Kristina Hill, Board member; and Eric Schmidt, consultant. He thanked the ETC for their inclusion of the Planning and Design Commissions in the development of their proposal, and stated that the Planning Commission views its role as helping to identify and address planning issues that affect both the project and the community which it will affect.

ETC Board member Kristina Hill gave a brief overview of the project, noting the Board's close work with the Department of Neighborhoods to ensure that the stations were consistent with neighborhood plans. She also acknowledged their work with the Planning and Design Commissions as well as their response to many of the issues they have raised in working sessions and in the Planning Commission's DEIS comments. These have included adding a cost/benefit analysis, revisions to the plan resulting with the workshops on Seattle Center. Hill voiced her satisfaction with the Council resolution approving design guidelines. She reiterated that their goal is to get a good programmatic proposal to the voters.



Harold Robertson, ETC Executive Director, also voiced his appreciation for the help that the Commissions have provided in their review and input on many aspects of the proposal as it was being developed. He briefly reviewed the schedule of next steps. On July 22 the ETC Board directed staff on major substantive points on the proposal; on August 5<sup>th</sup> they will approve the final plan. City Council will hold a Committee of the Whole session on August 5<sup>th</sup> and on August 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss and consider the proposal for approval to go on the ballot. Robertson stated that the results from the cost/benefit analysis were presented at the July 22 ETC Board meeting and that they are getting the final report soon. The outcomes of this analysis validated that the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax is adequate to pay for the \$2 billion ETC proposal. The ETC proposal makes a commitment to a 14 mile route, and describes areas where flexibility is needed (Seattle Center; 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue downtown). The proposal calls for a blended board with 7 appointed and 2 elected members at the outset and a later public vote on changing that to 7 elected and 2 appointed members.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Matthew Kitchen thanked the ETC for doing the programmatic cost/benefit analysis. He stated that the Council Resolution focuses financial requirements to the ETC for mitigating impacts that will not be identified until the project level EIS. He asked about what level of uncertainty this produces for ETC. Kristina Hill responded that the ETC is only responsible for direct impacts and that they will be trying to stimulate additional improvements by the private sector and the City to augment their mitigation measures. Harold Robertson also noted that the ETC has added \$32 million for project level design analysis to address access/circulation, \$25 million for parking at end stations, and \$500,000 to each station for design treatment. Commissioner Kitchen asked if the City feels comfortable with the proposed funding for impact mitigation. Ethan Melone stated that the City considered this in the risk analysis, including assumptions that more might be done at some stations regarding design treatment (using Vancouver Sky Train's \$3 – 7 million per station total). The urban design risk was estimated at \$20 million – funds needed to address design issues beyond basic station design.

Commissioner Val Thomas expressed concern about the reference in the City's memo to the City's Resolution 30485 that suggests that the guideway design should be consistent with creating a "system-wide identity." He noted that special design treatment of the guideway within downtown could be discouraged as being in conflict with this policy guidance. Kristina Hill stated that some of the design treatment might be accomplished in the facing on the columns, noting that a number of creative ideas for these emerged from the column design charrette they sponsored.

Commissioner John Owen asked for clarification in changes to the column and guideway size. Eric Schmidt responded that columns are 3' in diameter along the guideway and the 8' columns at stand-alone stations have been changed to two 4' columns. These same station columns are two 3' columns where the station is incorporated into a building. Harold Robertson reminded Commissioners that they have placed a strong emphasis on seeking co-development at stations, especially downtown.

Design Commissioner Jack Mackie stated the Design Commission's concern with the inadequacy of the graphic representation of the monorail and their support for a full scale mock-up of the guideway and a station on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. He noted this would allow people to see what the system would actually look like and also called for a rough schematic of the bulk and mass of the stations. Kristina Hill responded that a mock-up now would make some assumptions that may not be resolved until the project design and analysis process over the next two years. Design Commissioner Tory Laughlin-Taylor stated that she sees a very expensive education process. While she applauded the application of lessons from the light rail experience, she noted that most of the struggle with light rail came in the project planning stage. She also reminded Commissioners and the ETC that a downtown elevated light rail configuration was rejected in favor of a tunnel, and then asked why we would accept that option now. Kristina Hill responded that this project has tried to put urban design front and center, a

significant difference in approach from the light rail project. She acknowledged that they may not have shared everything with the Commissions and the public that led to their final design options.

Design Commissioner Jack Mackie suggested that if \$6 million is being turned back to the City, the Mayor should be asked to allocate some of that for a full-scale mock-up. Design Commissioner David Spiker articulated his concerns about the effect of the monorail on open space in downtown, particularly Belltown where much attention has been paid to preserving view corridors from east-west streets, and considering these as part of the open space in this dense urban environment. He voiced the opinion that the monorail will violate the spirit of City policy regarding these view corridors. He also stated that monorail design has not changed significantly since it was first developed so that developing a mock-up would be fairly easy to approximate this historically consistent design.

Kristina Hill responded to comments on view corridors from her academic perspective – stating that it depends on whether you are viewing the city in 19<sup>th</sup> century terms or as a future-focused 21<sup>st</sup> century city. Cities change over time and have evolving priorities, so view corridors are not as important as they may have been at an earlier time. Harold Robertson added that the key issue is whether the transportation benefits outweigh the aesthetic impacts and how well the monorail fits into the cityscape.

Planning Commissioner George Blomberg asked ETC staff how comments to the DEIS (from the Planning Commission, the City and others) and the cost/benefit analysis have influenced the final plan. Kristina Hill responded that DEIS comments have resulted in changes to their approach to parking and access, station enhancements, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> rail on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue to preserve the original monorail.

Community member Henry Aronson voiced his strong concern about the effects of the monorail on downtown view corridors, using University Street as an example of where a number of major developments have been required to set back to ensure protection of the view corridor to Elliott Bay. He also voiced concern that the discussion at the meeting today was not asking the tough questions.

Planning Commission Chair John Owen asked ETC to share the cost/benefit analysis report and noted interest in the transportation benefits, particularly regarding Metro service. Of particular concern to the Planning Commission is the coordination among transportation modes and reprogramming of bus transit services to improve connections.

Community member Jud Marquardt voiced concern about giving up major public rights-of-way to the monorail when most major cities do a downtown tunnel for transit to ensure they maintain those rights-of-way. He also called for a full scale mock-up, based on his concern that the public will not realize the physical reality of the monorail otherwise.

Professor Folke Nyberg spoke next, stating that he doesn't see how this project has gotten this far, especially related to view corridors. He noted that this alignment would cut off many views along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. He urged more attention to existing ordinances related to view corridors downtown and historic preservation. He noted that he is a monorail supporter, but has called for a freeway (I-5) alignment. Kristina Hill responded regarding the alignment that they were charged with creating a system that serves neighborhoods, not serve as a regional transit service.

Planning Commissioner Paul Tomita asked two questions: 1) whether the stations are built to accommodate 2-car or 4-car trains; and 2) if they are built for maximum capacity. Eric Schmidt responded that the 150' long stations will accommodate both size trains and are built for 3000 persons/hour capacity per direction with 4 minute headways or 6000/hour with 2 minute headways.

Planning Commission-appointee Steve Sheehy asked whether there will be another vote if the ultimate design is changed. Harold Robertson responded that if there is a route change, another vote would be needed except for areas where flexibility is defined (e.g. Seattle Center; West Seattle). In response to Jack Mackie's question about the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue route, Harold Robertson noted that the proposal is to take down and rebuild the existing guideway so that it is consistent with the new system.

Ethan Melone, SDOT, noted that many concerns expressed by the Commissions are aimed at the decision-making process and the authorizing agency. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted that the Commissions need to be able to fit their issues into an established set of processes so we can understand how these will be addressed as the project proceeds. These issues/decisions may be made later rather than at this point in the process. David Spiker added that the Commissions want to make sure that voters have a clear picture of the system when they go to vote.

Chair John Owen thanked the ETC and City staff for their update and discussion. He stated that the Commission needed to take the remaining time to determine its next steps on this issue.

Chair John Owen called for the Planning Commission to send a letter to the City Council urging them to address the following issues: urban design (particularly downtown), careful scrutiny of what the cost/benefit analysis tells us, and the larger benefit to the community that this project affords. This should also include a clear articulation of Metro bus service commitments.

Val Thomas stated that he is totally persuaded to the need for a full mock-up downtown of the monorail guideway and stations. He moved that the Planning Commission write a letter requesting the City to do a full-mock up. The motion was seconded by Mimi Sheridan; Commissioners voted unanimously for it.

Chair John Owen also requested that Commission staff obtain a copy of the ordinance that is being submitted to Council by the ETC. He voiced the Commission's need to understand the ballot language, and noted that the ballot should clearly state: 1) that what gets built may differ from what people vote on, and, 2) what the Board can and cannot do.

**Actions:** Motion approved to support installation of a full mock-up downtown of the monorail guideway and prototype station, calling on the ETC and City to implement this before the vote to aid in public understanding of the monorail.

Motion approved to prepare and send a letter to the Council prior to their August 5 Committee of the Whole (COW), identifying issues that the Commission requests be addressed by Council before they approve the ordinance authorizing the monorail ballot measure.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Public comments were accommodated in the ETC discussion.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Owen at 9:15 a.m.

## **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, September 12, 2002  
3:00 – 5:30 p.m.  
Municipal Building, Room 221



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

#### MINUTES

September 12, 2002

Approved September 26, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** John Owen, Chair; Denise Lathrop, Vice-Chair; George Blomberg, Angela Brooks, Grace Chien, Matthew Kitchen, Steve Sheehy, Mimi Sheridan, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Gregory Davis, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Diane Sugimura, Acting Director, DCLU; Tom Hauger and John Rahaim, DCLU.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from July 25, 2002 Planning Commission meetings were approved as written.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

**New Commissioners:** Chair John Owen welcomed new Commissioners and asked for all Commissioners to introduce themselves.

**Staffing Update:** Marty Curry reported that she has hired Kelly Walker on a part-time temporary basis to fill the Planning Commission Analyst position for the next couple of months. She is examining the City's lay-off list to try to find a person to fill this position. If no one is found from the list, the Commission will write a letter to the Mayor requesting they move forward with approving a waiver so that the position can be filled permanently.

#### **Committee Updates**

**Neighborhoods, Housing, Urban Centers Committee:** Scheduled to meet Thursday, September 19, noon – 1:30 p.m.

**Transportation Committee:** Scheduled to meet Tuesday, October 1, 2002 Committee members are asked to respond to Marty regarding alternative times for this meeting.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

**ETC:** Marty briefed Commissioners on Council's response to the Planning Commission's letter calling for a full-scale mock-up of the monorail. Council President Steinbrueck introduced an ordinance that would have charged the Planning Commission with developing either a mock-up or computer simulation. The ordinance was subsequently withdrawn when the Ethics and Elections Commission advised that expenditure of public funds for this effort could be construed as either a pro or con action on the ballot measure. Marty thanked Commissioners Owen and Thomas who helped with a brief exploration of the potential of a mock-up or computer simulation of the monorail.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen reported on his review of the Cost/Benefit Analysis that was done on the monorail. He noted that while he had some technical questions, overall it was a reasonable analysis that included a financial risk analysis. The conclusions found positive positive net benefits relative to costs. Mr. Kitchen noted that the primary benefits were travel time savings for monorail users (mostly current Metro users). While he questioned some assumptions, he noted that they don't affect the analysis.

**Alaskan Way Viaduct:** Commissioner Paul Tomita reported that the Leadership Group will meet October 24 to review further work by consultants in preparing the DEIS. He noted continuing concern about whether to include parking garages in the design. Tomita also encouraged other Commissioners to attend the Leadership Group meeting as these meetings tend to be open to more people than in the past. Marty Curry reported that she and John Rahaim recently met with Maureen Sullivan, WSDOT, to discuss the Commissioners' concern about costs and the scale of the project. She agreed to the usefulness of a working session to look at the no-build alternative that would assume use of surface streets in the event of the elevated structure being damaged in an earthquake and not replaced.

**Northgate:** Mimi Sheridan reported briefly on the Council briefing on August 6<sup>th</sup> in which she participated, stating that the briefing went well, with a lot of questions from Councilmembers and a commitment from OPM to return in September for a second briefing addressing those issues. Marty Curry reported that OPM has scheduled a second briefing for September 16, at which time they will present a more complete package of City commitments and proposed actions for consideration. She also noted that OPM staffer Jackie Kirn expressed interest in getting input from the Planning Commission regarding the public process for moving forward with these next steps.

### **Center City Open Space Draft Strategy: Approval of Commission Letter**

Chair John Owen reviewed briefly the key points in the letter, reflecting the Commission's discussion of the draft strategy in June. Commissioner Val Thomas urged a stronger statement about creating new open space in the downtown area, noting the large number of housing units that are being created in the downtown neighborhoods. The notion of open space for downtown should be more broadly defined of providing a "living room" for downtown residents that goes beyond regional open space like the Seattle Center and waterfront and that is more than expanding the use of public rights-of-way for pedestrian activities. Other Commissioners agreed that the letter should specifically call for expanding downtown open space and making this part of City policy. They noted that financing is an

issue and the strategy should call for exploring a wide variety of ways to finance additional open space.

**Action: Commissioners unanimously approved the letter with the above discussed revisions and asked staff to prepare and send it to John Rahaim.**

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

#### **Office of Sustainability and Environment; Mayor's Environmental Action Agenda Steve Nicholas, Director, OSE**

##### **Office of Sustainability and Environment**

Chair John Owen welcomed Steve Nicholas and expressed the Commission's appreciation for his briefing. Steve Nicholas began by providing a brief overview of the Office of Sustainability and Environment, noting that like the Planning Commission, OSE's work is framed by the Comprehensive Plan and serves to advocate for sustainable development in the City. Nicholas stated that OSE works primarily with larger City departments on how to implement and practice sustainable principles in service delivery and capital development. An important goal is to reduce the environmental impact of City actions. He noted that it is difficult to achieve an integrated approach since the City is fragmented into quite separate departments. Nicholas reviewed their three basic roles – coordinating implementation of the Mayor's Environmental Action Agenda, including an annual report; leading and facilitating citywide initiatives; and providing staff support to the Mayor's Office on sustainability issues.

##### **Environmental Action Agenda**

Steve Nicholas stated that the purpose of this agenda is to take the City's strong conservation ethic and apply it to a broad variety of issues and strategies such as transportation. The intent is to integrate sustainability into all aspects of the City's activities, including promoting environmentally sustainable projects at the neighborhood level.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan asked whether the Mayor's proposed initiative for new sidewalks was a part of this effort. Steve Nicholas stated that their office was not involved in developing this proposal. Marty Curry stated that this initiative is modeled after the SEAS pilot that SPU did in northwest Seattle – using swales and pathways rather than the traditional sidewalk/curb/gutter design.

Commissioner Val Thomas asked about success in getting cooperation of City departments. Steve Nicholas responded that there has been cooperation, but that there is difficulty in coordination since departments have their own missions and focus. OSE can often step in and identify ways for departments to work together. He acknowledged that there are not enough people working on this to think strategically and bring all the right people together.

Commissioner George Bloomberg asked whether the Comprehensive Plan provided an adequate framework for establishing a policy threshold. Steve Nicholas noted that the Comp Plan is often not very effective in providing that type of guidance. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted that it seems the areas of greatest potential success are where there are outside standards that can be brought to the process. Nicholas agreed that this is helpful.

Commissioner Paul Tomita asked if OSE was working with other public agencies such as the School District. Steve Nicholas affirmed that they are working with the School District and the Port of Seattle. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan asked how historic preservation is being incorporated into sustainability strategies. Steve Nicholas responded that this issue has come up recently and that historic preservation is an important part of sustainability.

Steve Nicholas asked that the Commission help with consideration of a Comp Plan amendment that was proposed several years ago based on a scan of sustainability policies in the plan. In response to a question about OSE's public outreach, Nicholas said that with limited resources they have relied mostly on their website and work with key City departments that in turn provide services to the community.

Chair John Owen closed the discussion by urging Steve Nicholas to work with the Commission to find ways to work together. He stated that a checklist (requested also by the Design Commission) would be helpful. He also urged that the Commission work with OSE to look for opportunities to promote sustainability in Northgate and South Lake Union as well as in strengthening and clarifying sustainability goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **DCLU/Planning Reorganization**

**Diane Sugimura, Acting Director, DCLU; Tom Hauger, John Rahaim, DCLU**

Tom Hauger began the briefing/discussion by sharing the draft mission statement that staff has developed for the newly formed planning unit in DCLU. Commissioners concurred with the basic direction and urged making the statement more proactive and "out front." John Rahaim also asked input on how to get the message out (of the planning unit's goals and mission). Commissioner Mimi Sheridan suggested it is good to have something that is a clearly defined planning entity and that it is essential to develop a clear public image. John Owen stated that the mission statement/functions need to have the "brain" added. He encouraged adding language about the role of helping the City achieve its goals, of coordinating planning – to be more expansive and assertive in setting forth the mission. Commissioner Paul Tomita noted that there are several important phrases that are absent – neighborhood planning, subarea planning, long range plan, goal, vision. He asserted that something more than the Comp Plan is needed and that this group should be defining this.

Commissioner Val Thomas suggested that the Comp Plan could be likened to the grandfatherly guy who has provided general wisdom and now the parent is needed – the strategy plans that derive from the Comp Plan. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen stated that this is the beginning of a decision model and that central to this is simplifying the Comp Plan and making it a true policy guide. Tom Hauger noted that by the end of 2004 the City must complete an update of the Comp Plan. He stated that DCLU, like the Planning Commission, is interested in producing a users' guide with a long term goal of making the Comprehensive Plan simpler and more streamlined. He also noted that DCLU/Comp Plan staff will be working on policy guides on issues like Industrial areas.

Additional comments from Commissioners included: decide what Seattle is going to be about – how it relates to specific areas or categories; planning should better inform the

regulatory side; how do we test where we have been, where we're going and how City actions implement the Comprehensive Plan – how do we create a closer connection between policy (Comp Plan) and interpretation; what are the challenges and how should the Planning Commission help?

Acting Director Diane Sugimura provided an update on the director search and key issues and activities. She reported that a firm has been hired to do a search for the new director and the timeline is to have someone hired before the end of the year. She stated that budget cuts are significantly affecting taking on new issues and staffing existing projects. Even with reduced revenues, a lot is happening in the land use/development arena. Development itself is still happening, with particular pressure on the industrial areas for reuse. This poses a significant challenge and calls for defining and advocating for long term goals. Sugimura stated that DCLU has agreed to re-examine the Commercial code – particularly looking at ways to make it less prescriptive and simpler. Both of these issues will be affected by the Mayor's strong commitment to economic development. DCLU is also heavily involved in major transportation projects, and the Center City (open space, waterfront planning).

Chair John Owen asserted that the Planning Commission's role in many of these issues should be early in the process, in scoping the project, as well as advising on planning issues and process. Commissioner Val Thomas asked whether the University District could be a pilot for the Commercial Code revisions. Commissioner Denise Lathrop suggested focusing subarea planning on areas where there is potential to accomplish some of these other goals.

Diane Sugimura briefly outlined next steps in the reorganization and creating a planning identity. These include hiring the director, changing the name, moving all planning staff to the 19<sup>th</sup> Floor, developing cross-group teams, working with the rest of DCLU and SDOT in forming and confirming the identity and relationships among the planning resources, getting out into the community to talk about planning. She then handed out an outline of the 2002 work program. Commissioner Val Thomas stated that he supported the work program and suggested that the Commission write a letter of support with comments on the mission. Paul Tomita added that the Commission should propose a coordinating role for DCLU.

Chair John Owen closed the session, noting the Commission's appreciation for the update and opportunity to share their ideas on the DCLU/planning reorganization. He confirmed that the Commission will respond with a letter stating the Commission's encouragement for the direction of the work so far.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Owen at 5:30 p.m.

#### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, September 26, 2002

7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221





# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

September 26, 2002

Approved October 10, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** John Owen, Chair; Denise Lathrop, Vice-Chair; Anjali Bhagat, George Blomberg, Angela Brooks, Gregory Davis, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Grace Chien, , Steve Sheehy, Linda Stalzer

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry, Kelly Walker

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Ken Johnson, Project Coordinator, Office of Policy Management (OPM), Jackie Kirn, OPM, Bob Klug, Seattle City Light (SCL), John Rahaim, Department of Design Construction and Land Use (DCLU), Yvonne Sanchez, Department of Neighborhoods (DON), Eric Tweit, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the 12 September 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved with one amendment (by M Kitchen).

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

**New Commissioners:** Chair John Owen welcomed Anjali Bhagat, a new Commissioner and who was not able to make the early September meeting.

**Staffing Update:** Marty Curry asked Commissioners to welcome Kelly Walker as the new temporary Planning Commission analyst. Kelly is a much needed addition to the Planning Commission staff and will be working part-time for the next few months. She is currently working on updating the Planning Commission's website and with DCLU staff on follow-up to the Comp Plan Case studies' project. She will also help provide general staff support to Planning Commission meetings.

#### **Committee Updates**

**Housing, Neighborhoods, Urban Centers:** While two issues were highlighted, Commissioners were advised to refer to the meeting notes in their folders. Denise Lathrop reported that the committee discussed with Rebecca Herzfeld, DON's interest in having the Planning Commission take on the policy advisory function of the current Neighborhood Planning Implementation Advisory Committee (NPIAC), which will sunset at the end of

2002. Val Thomas pointed out that the proposal would be for the Planning Commission to meet as a Committee of the Whole in this function, inviting neighborhood plan stewards to meet with them, probably on a quarterly basis. This forum would address issues at the policy level. The general consensus is to move forward, but to work with DON in addressing scope and resource limitations, clearly defining the process for setting the work plan and for the Commission's role.

**Transportation Committee:** This meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1 from 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM (preceding the Executive Committee meeting).

### **PROJECT UPDATES**

#### **Comp Plan Case Studies**

Because DCLU staff member Michael Stanger — who has been facilitating the Case Study Neighborhood project — will be returning to school, the Planning Commission has been asked to take the lead in developing and facilitating the focus groups in the Case Study areas. Kelly Walker and Marty Curry will be working with the Commission's ad hoc committee and DCLU Comp Plan staff to plan these events that we anticipate will be held in late October.

#### **Housing Choices Public Process**

DCLU has asked the Planning Commission to take the lead in developing the public process for the package of housing ordinances. A recent informal brown bag discussion between some of the developers of cottage housing and ADU's pointed out the need for more work and input on these proposals before holding a large public workshop. Staff and the Housing, Neighborhoods, Urban Centers Committee will provide leadership in this activity. We anticipate smaller, more informal public forums or focus groups, concentrating on neighborhood plan stewards and those who have been involved in the demonstration projects. These would be followed by an open house geared toward the general public.

#### **Alaska Way Viaduct**

Planning Commission staff is meeting this week to develop a strategy for next steps, including meeting with Grace Crunican to discuss the joint Commission issues regarding how this project fits into the City's transportation goals and the larger transportation network, including transit and carpools. (The Transportation Committee will be discussing this next week.)

#### **ETC**

Marty Curry has been contacted by David Brewster regarding two Town Hall Monorail Debates, scheduled for October 15 and 22<sup>nd</sup>. He wants to explore the potential for Commission involvement as one of several neutral participants. Marty will attend an initial planning meeting on October 2 to get more information and report back to the Executive Committee.

The Downtown District Council is also sponsoring a Center City Forum on the Seattle Monorail proposal on Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> (5:30 – 7:30 PM) at the West Precinct Station. We are making available the position papers prepared by the Planning and Design Commissions.

### **Northgate**

Jackie Kirn, staff member of the newly formed Office of Policy and Management (OPM), joined the Commission to give a brief update on the office's work on the Northgate Urban Center. Jackie stated that the total budget for the proposed projects and development activity is \$8 million and that the project is receiving a \$1.3 million grant from PSRC for street improvements along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Jackie offered to give an in-depth briefing at a future meeting (October), either to the full Commission or the Housing, Neighborhoods and Urban Centers Committee, and to talk about the Commission's potential role in helping with the mayor's initiative. Chair John Owen stated that the Planning Commission has been involved in this project and would like to continue to help in any appropriate way.

## **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

### **SOUTH LAKE UNION COORDINATION**

**Ken Johnsen, South Lake Union Project Coordinator, Office of Policy Management**

Chair John Owen welcomed Ken Johnsen and John Rahaim and expressed the Commission's appreciation for their briefing. Johnsen stated that Mayor Nickels considers South Lake Union a jewel as a potential close-in Center City neighborhood. The Mayor wants to move forward projects that implement the neighborhood plan and City visions for the park and the neighborhood. Johnsen noted that City acquisition of South Lake Union Park and the Alaska Way Viaduct alternatives have been a catalyst for considering the possibility of reconnecting the grid. Although this will require transportation funding, the solution should reflect a broader urban planning response and not just be transportation engineered. SLU property owners such as Vulcan, Fred Hutchison, PEMCO and the Seattle Times along with the South Lake Union neighborhood organizations are working collaboratively with the City on these issues. He also noted that City Light is another important player since they will need to build a substation in the area to meet future energy demands.

### **PUBLIC REALM PLAN**

**John Rahaim, Executive Director, CityDesign**

John Rahaim explained that work on the draft Public Realm Plan and Open Space Strategy for SLU began with an inventory of what is on the table – Mercer/Valley Street revisions, several major private developments, South Lake Union Park development, landscaping of the I-5/Mercer portal, Sound Transit's light rail alternative, and a potential trolley route along Westlake and Terry Avenues. This array of proposed and actual projects represents the potential for significant change. He stated that the City should logically be putting forward a plan for the public realm since it is the largest property owner with three parks, Seattle Center and street rights-of-way. The focus of the public realm plan is to provide guidance to developing in a way that promotes effective use of the public spaces.

Rahaim also noted that although the C1 district is quiet, has several designated landmarks, and a pleasant relationship to the park; housing cannot currently be developed there. Another challenge is posed by the IC zone in the middle of the neighborhood that doesn't allow housing or require design review.

John Rahaim briefly described the Public Realm Plan's focus on creating pedestrian oriented building edges, retail along Westlake, on the south side of Valley and around public parks and playgrounds. The plan suggests that certain areas *require* retail while it would be *encouraged* in other parts. Commissioner Val Thomas advised that you can discourage housing development around parks if you require retail and encouraged allowing ground floor housing, focusing retail requirements only in some areas.

Rahaim stated that the Public Realm plan seeks to reinforce street character and create corridor connections from Westlake to Mercer and Dexter, Fairview and Denny, and to reinforce green streets between Eastlake and Fairview and beyond to Seattle Center.

CityDesign's recommendation for the Overall Public Realm Plan is to: "Develop the Public Realm Plan iteratively with the transportation plan, but establish in advance that certain streets — Terry, Thomas, Harrison, and Valley — have much stronger pedestrian orientation and a de-emphasis on vehicular movement."

### **Discussion**

Commissioner John Owen noted that last year's design workshop called for more of an emphasis on Terry as a pedestrian street and asked why the plan didn't call for more retail on Terry. Rahaim stated that their studies suggested that Terry might not support more retail in addition to Westlake. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan asked if there was a plan for "Vulcan Park" near Denny Park and for providing better access to South Lake Union Park. Rahaim stated that the City hopes that that or a similar playfield will be retained. One option might be to build on top of a new City Light substation. Ken Johnsen indicated that access to SLU Park would be on the surface. While the intention is to slow traffic speed on surrounding streets, Mercer will be a challenge because of its broadened width. Commissioner Owen stated that Mercer might not need to be pedestrian friendly as long as there is appropriate pedestrian access.

Yvonne Sanchez, Director of Department of Neighborhoods voiced the importance of considering access of Cascade residents, many of whom are lower income and working class people, to South Lake Union park. John Rahaim voiced his hope that the Public Realm Plan supports Cascade residents as well as others who work and will live in other parts of South Lake Union.

Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa asked if the traffic plan affords bicycle routes. Eric Tweit from SDOT stated that his study would include pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Commissioner Kitchen asked if this proposal relies on the Alaska Way Viaduct (AWV) project. Ken Johnsen stated that the notion to reconnect the area to the greater city grid grew out of the AWV project but is not a component of it. However, there is approximately \$70 million in the Regional Transportation project budget that includes provisions for the Mercer/Valley project as part of the Aurora project. Johnsen acknowledged that reconnecting the grid does require lowering of Aurora, which can't happen without this significant funding source.

Commissioner George Blomberg asked whether all of these pieces are coordinated and if so, what the resulting vision is. Other questions were raised about whether the services currently

provided in South Lake Union are still necessary, and if so, how they are addressed in the discussion about opportunities for housing and retail throughout the area. Commissioner Val Thomas stated that if additional housing is desired, housing goals including incomes to be served should be developed, even if they are not specific.

Commission Chair John Owen voiced his appreciation for the iterative process that has been used in South Lake Union and encouraged continuing as ideas become more refined. Ken Johnsen acknowledged that the City is trying to get ahead of development so that it can give some guidance to how the area develops. Commissioner Darryl Smith voiced interest in the Commission staying engaged in the housing aspects, particularly ensuring that housing serves a variety of incomes as these changes in the area occur. In response, John Rahaim stated that they are drawing upon the goals set forth in the neighborhood plan and hope to secure a mixed-use of housing (including affordable) and incomes.

Commissioner Val Thomas complimented the City in starting a process that the Commission has called for – developing more guidance to how the area develops, balancing public and private needs. He complimented the City on “riding a spirited horse” and noted that the key word is evolutionary change. John Rahaim thanked the Commission for raising the key planning questions and encouraged that they continue to play this important role.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop encouraged the City to think carefully about superblock development in the area and the impact it would have on the overall neighborhood character. She noted that it’s important to be able to see the broader vision of how the area might develop to understand where and how much superblock development may be appropriate in maintaining a balance.

Ken Johnsen encouraged the Commission to share their enthusiasm for what the City is doing in South Lake Union with the Mayor. Commission Chair John Owen recommended, and Commissioners assented, that the Commission send a letter to the Office of Policy Management reflecting their comments and support for the work in South Lake Union. Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa made a final note that it would be helpful in developing support for the City’s efforts in South Lake Union to look at how adjacent neighborhoods benefit from the transportation, housing and Public Realm Plan for the area.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no additional public comments.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Owen at 9:15 AM

#### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, 10 October 2002

3:00—5:30 PM

Municipal Building, Room 221

*Copies of the Planning Commission Minutes are available by calling 684-0433.*



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

October 10, 2002

Approved October 24, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** John Owen, Chair; Denise Lathrop, Vice-Chair; Anjali Bhagat, George Blomberg, Angela Brooks, Grace Chien, Gregory Davis, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Steve Sheehy, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Lyn Krizanich, Mimi Sheridan

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry, Kelly Walker

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Mayor Greg Nickels, Jackie Kirn, OPM; Stephanie Pure, City Council; John Rahaim, DCLU; Susan Sanchez, SDOT; Diane Sugimura, DCLU

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the September 26, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved with one amendment (by Steve Sheehy).

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair John Owen announced several upcoming events of interest to Planning Commissioners. These include the Town Hall Monorail debates (October 15 and 22) and the Northwest Sector Event (October 14).

#### **Committee Updates**

**Housing, Neighborhoods, Urban Centers:** The next meeting of this committee is being scheduled for next week; awaiting responses from several members about availability.

**Transportation Committee:** Notes from the October 1 Transportation Committee were in Commissioners' folders. The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

#### **Response Letters to South Lake Union Briefings**

Chair John Owen asked for comments on the draft letters from the Commission to Ken Johnsen and John Rahaim, responding to their South Lake Union briefings. He noted that these were well drafted letters and reflected the key points in the Commission's discussion with Johnsen and Rahaim at the September 26 Commission meeting. Marty Curry noted that she had had an email from Steve Nicholas prior to the 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, asking the Commission to encourage inclusion of sustainability goals in South Lake Union planning. Commissioners

directed staff to include reference to sustainability in a closing statement of the letters. Commissioner Val Thomas also suggested clarifying the point about limiting requirements for ground level retail to “certain blockfronts.” With these additions, the Commission approved both letters to be signed by the Chair and sent.

Chair John Owen also reported on a follow-up conversation he had with Chris Leman, an Eastlake resident who had asked for the Commission’s help in supporting and pursuing a trail under I-5 along Eastlake and Fairview. John Owen shared the Commission’s conclusion that given its focus on broader policy issues and planning processes and its limited staff/volunteer capacity, it does not have the ability to take on more specific proposals such as this. However, the Commission does continue to be supportive of exploring opportunities for open space within the Center City.

#### **Update on Ethics and Elections Commission Guidance on Commission Roles**

Marty Curry shared with Commissioners an email from the Ethics and Elections Commission staff and new director regarding Boards and Commissions taking positions on ballot measures and participating in discussion of such measures. They have determined that it is not appropriate for Boards and Commissions to take positions on ballot measures, but it is appropriate for them to participate in or sponsor forums where both sides of the issue are aired. In these cases, they must take care to be objective in their involvement. Commissioners may speak as individuals on ballot measures but not as Commission representatives.

Commissioners voiced concern about the potential effect on their ability to give independent advice and voice on important planning issues. They also questioned whether this standard reflects how Boards and Commissions have acted in the past, noting the Planning Commission’s support for the Housing Levy when the Executive’s proposal was submitted to the City Council; the Parks Board’s support for the Pro-Parks Levy. Staff was directed to ask for more detailed rationale from the Ethics and Elections.

#### **PRESENTATION: CONVERSATION WITH MAYOR NICKELS**

Chair John Owen welcomed Mayor Nickels and asked Commissioners to introduce themselves. He also noted that the Planning Commission is action oriented, looking for ways to be engaged and of service to the City as it grapples with a wide variety of complex planning issues.

Mayor Nickels thanked the Commission for inviting him to meet with them and noted that the two major issues identified by the Commission — Transportation and Economic Development — are high priorities to him.

Mayor Nickels prefaced his statements with a cautionary note that the City’s budget resources are not as healthy as in the past, due to a slowing economy and the resulting reduction in tax revenues. He stated that his priorities are transportation, economic development, public safety and building community.

**Transportation:** Mayor Nickels noted that hiring Grace Crunican has been an important step in creating a strong, forward-looking transportation department in the City. Light rail, the monorail, and the Alaska Way Viaduct offer us the opportunity to reshape the city and

our transportation system. The waterfront is the “face of our city,” which can be enhanced by removing the Viaduct, both in terms of transportation as well as focusing the marina district (Piers 37 – 46) and extending Pioneer Square to the water. He reported that the \$50 million Community Development fund for Rainier Valley will be critical in creating economic and community development opportunities with development of the light rail line.

Mayor Nickels characterized the monorail as early in its evolution and said that he sees it as a corollary to light rail (the regional transit system). It offers a local system and a way to efficiently move through the city. He stated that one of his hopes for the ultimate monorail route is to connect Ballard with I-5 and the University District along 45<sup>th</sup> Street. Nickels stated that an important element in his transportation focus is to deliver on the little things and to keep up on maintenance. He cited a more aggressive schedule for resurfacing streets and building lower cost sidewalks. He noted a recent example where the City is adding sidewalks at 3<sup>rd</sup> NW and NW 85<sup>th</sup> where low-income family housing is being developed, thereby providing safe pedestrian connections for those families to the retail and services core of Greenwood.

**Economic Development:** Mayor Nickels stated that his recent appointment of Jill Nishi as the Director of the Office of Economic Development will ensure a strong capacity within the City on economic development issues. He noted that one of the biggest economic assets for the city is the University of Washington. His goal is to work with the UW to educate students for jobs here and to put their economic power to work in the neighborhood as well as in the broader community. The Mayor also noted his priority for addressing economic development needs on the “Ave” in the University District, Broadway on Capitol Hill and Pioneer Square (particularly regarding the north stadium development).

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Val Thomas thanked the Mayor for his comments and stated his agreement with comments on the University of Washington. He noted that safety problems, stemming from the behavior of young toughs, threaten not only the University District but Broadway on Capitol Hill as well. He characterized Broadway as in serious trouble from these public safety problems and expressed the need for a combined economic development and community building strategy to address these problems. Mayor Nickels agreed that these are fragile neighborhoods that need attention. He stated that one of the reasons for the focus on the University District is that the University’s Master Plan offers the opportunity to make changes in the lease lid that might help the economic situation on the Ave. He also noted that there should be news regarding some new development on the Ave soon. Mayor Nickels asked Commissioners for their input on what is needed on Broadway – should there be “tweaks” in the zoning or more substantive changes? Mayor Nickels reported that in Belltown the emphasis is on public safety through bicycle patrols. Pioneer Square presents similar public safety challenges, but this area may be helped by north stadium lot development.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen stated that the viability of transit, especially downtown, is based on bus transit working effectively. He asked what the Mayor’s take is on the change in the Metro 6-Year Plan policy that reduces Seattle’s share of new service. Mayor Nickels acknowledged that this new allocation policy is not good for Seattle and that the County Council’s actions undermine the financing strategy. He stated that the City will have to



figure out ways to influence the allocation policy and noted that he is beginning meetings with mayors in the county's municipalities to work on a variety of issues. While they won't begin with transit, it will provide a forum for getting these issues on the table to be dealt with more directly by the municipalities.

Commissioner Darryl Smith directed the Mayor's attention to Rainier Beach, an urban village that needs the City's support to achieve economic development. Mayor Nickels stated that the City is relooking at ways to redirect Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds into community development investment strategies.

Commissioner Grace Chien noted that the Sound Transit Community Development fund does not extend to Beacon Hill and asked what resources will be available to help mitigate impacts, particularly on businesses affected by the light rail station. Mayor Nickels responded that the Community Development fund recognizes the additional impact of an at-grade light rail alignment. There are funds in the Sound Transit budget to mitigate business displacement, some of which have already been used to identify and provide early information to affected businesses.

Chair John Owen asked Mayor Nickels in what ways the Planning Commission could help move forward the Mayor's agenda. Mayor Nickels responded immediately by saying they could help find a new DCLU director! He also stated that the Commission could be very useful in the effort to simplify the land use code. Commissioner Val Thomas observed that through neighborhood planning a lot more people are engaged in the community who are more positive about land use, and less fearful about change. Commissioner Linda Stalzer added that she is working on a project in Issaquah that is trying to recreate active neighborhoods — clear testimony to the value of Seattle neighborhoods. She noted, however, that safety in Seattle's neighborhoods is an issue that needs to be addressed. Stalzer also observed that more flexible zoning is one of the ways to make it easier to create more housing types. Mayor Nickels stated that the original low income housing ("scattered site") was sited in West Seattle and was a poor example of housing that fits into the neighborhood. Now we have well designed affordable housing throughout the city.

Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa applauded the Mayor's attention to sidewalks and the availability of some funding (e.g. CDBG) to help specific areas. She asked how decisions will be made on where new sidewalks will go; where will the redirected CDBG funds go? Mayor Nickels responded that the sidewalk design being proposed is one quarter the cost of traditional sidewalks with curbs and gutters. These use natural drainage which is less costly and better for the environment. He stated that one high priority will be around the SHA Hope VI projects in Southeast and Southwest Seattle. He also noted that Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) will be more actively promoted and SPU drainage funds will provide an additional resource. The key will be to put different tools together. Commissioner Krikawa stated that the City developed criteria for where sidewalks were needed in relation to the Sound Transit light rail project and suggested using similar criteria when determining priorities for new sidewalks in other areas of the city. The Mayor thanked her for this suggestion.

Chair John Owen thanked Mayor Nickels for his time and reiterated the Planning Commission's commitment to working with the Mayor on his priorities.

## **COMMISSION BUSINESS (continued)**

### **Project Updates:**

**Housing Choices:** Marty Curry gave a brief update on the collaboration between the Planning Commission and DCLU in developing and carrying out a public process on land use legislation on Cottage Housing, Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) and Lowrise 3-4. Focus groups are being suggested as a way to have more substantive discussions with small groups of citizens and housing developers, followed by broader public events (e.g. a public open house). She noted the intent to work early with elected officials to get their support for the public process and to define what they consider an effective outcome that would allow them to move forward. Commissioners expressed interest in the strategy of engaging officials in the public process, and particularly to encourage them to give credibility to such efforts.

**Commercial Code:** Commissioner Val Thomas reported a meeting with Acting DCLU Director Diane Sugimura on redoing the Commercial Land Use Code. He suggested making it a performance based code, allowing it to be shorter and less prescriptive. He also suggested to begin by looking at codes in other cities. Chair John Owen observed that there are a number of ways to rethink the Commercial Code.

Commissioner Grace Chien noted that the culture of the staff is key to performance based codes. They can't be afraid to make decisions. Therefore the education of the staff and training of Design Review Boards is critical. Commissioner Linda Stalzer agreed and stated that the criteria have to be objective and measurable. Her concern is whether this would effectively reduce the complications of the current code or replace it with a different complexity.

Ms. Stalzer also advised that the process of rethinking the land used code must be designed to get at decisions. She advised against setting people up to spend a lot of time with ultimately no action (referring to the downtown land use code changes that have not moved forward). Chair John Owen agreed that the process/design idea is important. The key is to get the elected officials to listen during the public process – it does make a difference.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop suggested looking at example such as Tacoma. Commissioner Angela Brooks noted that she has worked on revisions to the land use code for wireless/cell towers with the City. It has been a lot of work with many revisions, but the code is not any easier to understand or friendlier to use. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen observed that maybe tackling the larger code issues may be a big enough issue to get elected officials to look at this change in process (engaging them early and getting commitments to seriously use the results of the public process).

### **Commission Priorities**

Chair John Owen noted that Commissioners need to think about where they want to spend their "action" time. One big effort is working to make the Comprehensive Plan legible.

Jackie Kirn, OPM, noted that there are several priority issues that OPM is working on for the Mayor that the Commission should be aware of, including Northgate, the north Stadium redevelopment and Growth Management issues. She also noted that Alec Fiskien, OPM, is working on Port issues including the area encompassing Piers 37 – 46.

Commissioner George Blomberg, first noting the Mayor's priorities on economic development and transportation, asked how the Planning Commission can be involved when people put these pieces together? Ms. Kirn responded that the first step is for the Commission to determine where it wants to put its energy.

Commissioner Steve Sheehy asked, with OPM implementing the policy priorities of the Mayor, who implements Council's policy priorities? He also asked how OPM engages with elected officials. Jackie Kirn responded that the Council does contribute to determining the policy issues that are on OPM's work plan, but really relies on its own Council Central staff to do specific work on policy priorities that are not shared with the Executive.

Chair John Owen closed the discussion by directing the Executive Committee to look at these issues and come back to the full Commission with recommendations.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Owen at 5:20 p.m.

#### **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, 24 October 2002

7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221

*Copies of the Planning Commission Minutes are available by calling 684-0433.*



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Planning Commission

Marty Curry, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVED MINUTES October 24, 2002

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** John Owen, Chair; George Blomberg, Angela Brooks, Grace Chien, Gregory Davis, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Steve Sheehy, Mimi Sheridan, Darryl Smith, Val Thomas

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Anjali Bhagat, Matthew Kitchen, Denise Lathrop, Linda Stalzer, Paul Tomita

**STAFF PRESENT:** Marty Curry, Kelly Walker

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Jackie Kim, Office of Policy Management (OPM)

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Owen called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the October 10, 2002 Planning Commission meeting were approved unanimously as written.

#### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair John Owen noted that the Commission has sent three letters since their last meeting – to Ken Johnsen and John Rahaim responding to their briefings on SLU and to Mayor Nickels thanking him for meeting with the Commission.

Chair John Owen also reported that he will be contacting Don Royse, Design Commission Chair, to discuss a possible meeting with the Ethics and Elections Commission Director Terry Thomas. The purpose is to follow up on his email response to questions about involvement of the Commissions on ballot measures.

#### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

##### **Commission Letter: on Draft Large Development Disclosure Ordinance**

Chair John Owen asked for Commissioner comments on a draft letter responding to Councilmember Nick Licata's proposed Large Development Disclosure Ordinance. Commissioners had no changes to the draft letter that staff prepared based on input from several Commissioners and the Commission's previous comments on the Northgate GDP. Commissioners also indicated their support for DCLU Acting Director Diane Sugimura's memo to Councilmember Licata, outlining DCLU's concerns regarding the proposed ordinance.

## **PRESENTATION: NORTHGATE BRIEFING/UPDATE**

Jackie Kirn, Office of Policy Management

Chair John Owen welcomed Jackie Kirn and thanked her for coming to update the Commission on the Executive's work on Northgate.

Jackie Kirn began by highlighting the areas in which there is current activity. These include:

- the South Lot where the City wants to explore more creative open space ideas on the eastern 3 acres that the Executive proposes the City purchase;
- the Seattle Public Library which is currently in the architect selection process for the Northgate branch library;
- Simon Properties which has agreed to establish a pedestrian connection from their site to the new library/community center complex; and
- 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape plan where a \$1.3 million PSRC grant is likely to be awarded and where the City is negotiating with Simon Properties to contribute funds that the City would match for improvements at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE/105<sup>th</sup> entrance.

Ms. Kirn reported that Mayor Nickels sent a letter in May to the community stating his intent to develop a legislative package that would contain these and other initiatives aimed at moving a number of issues forward in Northgate. The Executive's intent is to have a framework resolution passed by City Council that would provide the rationale and make a City commitment to a number of actions. In addition to the project-type activities, this package would include adoption of neighborhood specific design guidelines, repeal of the GDP, legislation enabling the p-patch, formal recognition of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Streetscape Design Plan, and legislation allowing the City to enter into agreements with property owners to meet stormwater/drainage needs and requirements.

Jackie Kirn stated the Executive's desire to hold a public meeting to share this initiative and get feedback from the community within the next month. However, the timing of the meeting is dependent upon getting more specific proposals from the major property owners to include in the package. She acknowledged that this is critical "new" information that is needed to go back to the community.

### **Commission Discussion**

Commissioner Val Thomas asked Ms. Kirn if the City has any idea of Simon Properties' plan for their site. Jackie Kirn responded that they intend to demolish the office/theatre complex and replace it with new development. Earlier Barnes and Noble was considering this site, but she was not sure whether they are still interested. Nordstrom has also expressed the need to expand their store – either on the current or alternate. Simon has also mentioned the potential development of new free-standing buildings on the west side of the mall site.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan voiced some concern about development on the west side of the mall, observing that it seems like new development should occur on the east side where the mall connects to the community. Commissioner Val Thomas concurred and likened the mall to a castle with a moat around it. He urged that the Mayor send a message to Simon Properties that its next development plans should be aimed at adding more "gates" to cross

the moat, using new free standing development where it can help tie the mall into the community. Val Thomas also stated that he was encouraged by Nordstrom's interest in expanding their store.

Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa asked how parking would be replaced if new retail is developed and if there is a way to consolidate parking. Both Marty Curry and Jackie Kirn noted that this issue has been a key obstacle to "filling in" the existing parking areas since every space is leased to one of the tenant stores. Losing parking spaces would require changing leases with tenants – rents would presumably be reduced if tenants were paying for less parking.

Commission Chair John Owen asked when the last comprehensive transportation study was done in the Northgate area. Jackie Kirn responded that it was probably the analysis that was done for the General Development Plan (1997). Commissioner Krikawa noted that this analysis needs to be redone since a number of things have changed, including the GDP's plan for a large multi-screen cinema that may be of a much reduced scale if it occurs at all in the King County TOD project. Krikawa also noted that Sound Transit updated the baseline traffic information in its Supplemental EIS on North Link.

Jackie Kirn stated that the City is interested in getting all of the developers together to do a coordinated traffic analysis. OPM is working with SDOT on this effort, the goal of which is to have better treatment of cumulative effects of anticipated developments. Several Commissioners observed that the Planned Action or a programmatic EIS are existing tools that can incorporate this type of effort. Commissioner George Blomberg noted that a traffic analysis could be broader than SEPA, and give a bigger picture to the City and the community.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan asked if other property owners would help with the cost of a storm water detention facility on the eastern piece of the South Lot that the City is suggesting it purchase for this purpose. Jackie Kirn responded affirmatively.

Commissioner Sheridan also expressed concern about the short time frame to plan for a November 20 public meeting. Jackie Kirn responded that this date is dependent upon getting more specific information from Security Properties and Simon Properties on their development plans. However, it is important to have this meeting in November if the Executive is going to be able to bring a legislative proposal to Council in December. If it is pushed back, it will likely not happen until after the holidays. Commission Chair John Owen stated that the news is the coordinated proposal; these are not just a series of separate projects, but there is a concerted effort to ensure that they both relate to and build on one another. He urged that the City show how the legislative elements fit together and collectively move the area toward its urban center goals.

Commissioner Steve Sheehy asked why the traffic information is stale, noting that this affects the willingness of partners to participate. Chair John Owen stated that the transportation analysis should attempt to create a stronger pedestrian focus, a change from the former assumptions that vehicular modes take precedence. Jackie Kirn concurred that an effort to accommodate traffic and pedestrian comfort in any design will be key.

Jackie Kirn made a specific request, asking if the Planning Commission would be the convenor of the public meeting, tentatively planned for November 20. She urged that they agree to this role, stating that the Commission has strong credibility in the community and would provide a more neutral perspective. Commissioners asked for a clearer definition of what this would entail – formal sponsorship or co-sponsorship of the meeting, moderating the meeting, having members attend as observers or participants? They also asked about the specific focus of the meeting. Ms. Kirn stated that key issues would be traffic/transportation, drainage, pedestrian issues, connecting to the neighborhood (public facilities and private development), and the GDP (recommendation to repeal). She also responded that the Commission's role would be to host the meeting, with a Commissioner moderator welcoming people, introduce the presentation and closing the meeting.

While several Commissioners voiced concern about the timing, they did give overall support for the Commission playing the role of moderator for the meeting. John Owen noted that while interested, he is not available on November 20. Marty Curry indicated that she would work with Commissioners to identify a potential moderator and several people who could attend the meeting.

Jackie Kirn then described the proposed repeal of the GDP, a key element of the Executive package. She noted that it will be important to describe how key issues of concern to the community and the City will be protected; what tools remain that can be used. These include SEPA, the Northgate Overlay, the Master Use Permit (MUP), Neighborhood Specific Design Guidelines and design review. Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa also noted that the City's presentation should include assignments of responsibility and the schedule and duration of the various elements of the package.

Commissioners Smith, Owen and Thomas confirmed the Planning Commission's ability to take the neutral facilitator role, but also cautioned that the City clearly is trying to achieve more here than just imparting information. They asked how the meeting could be formatted to keep from getting sidetracked and to focus on the broader strategy. Jackie Kirn responded that they are thinking about having an open house format for part of the meeting, with stations for each of the elements that are staffed. These would give citizens an opportunity to talk one-on-one to staff. Ms. Kirn also noted that she has been going to the Northgate Chamber of Commerce and community organization meetings, showing the map and talking generally about the elements of the package.

Commission Chair John Owen suggested that the meeting could be part informational and part getting input from the community that would be used to scope the overall package. Mimi Sheridan also noted that the PI is doing an article on Northgate soon that could help raise awareness and interest in the public meeting.

Commissioner Val Thomas articulated his sense of confidence in Jackie Kirn's husbanding of this process. Chair John Owen echoed this sentiment and thanked Ms. Kirn for her work and for including the Commission. Ms. Kirn thanked them for their continued interest in this area and affirmed that she would involve Commission staff in the planning for the meeting.

## **COMMISSION BUSINESS (continued)**

### **Committee Updates**

**Housing, Neighborhoods, Urban Centers:** Commissioners were encouraged to read the October 15 meeting notes, included in their folders. Commissioner Val Thomas noted the Commission's involvement in the public process for housing code changes and urged the Commission to continue to push this process forward. Marty Curry mentioned that the committee is still discussing the possibility of a focus group or public workshop to discuss these and other issues.

**Transportation Committee:** No meeting has been held since the last full Commission Meeting. Marty Curry reported that she and Commissioner Paul Tomita attended a Flexible Transportation Options session on the Alaska Way Viaduct Project. This was an information session with WSDOT reporting on work they have been doing with consultants to examine the broader transportation modes and how they can be improved through the AWV project. Marty also noted that the committee would like to move forward with the Comp Plan user's guide that the Planning Commission proposed last year. Grace Crunican and Susan Sanchez want to focus on the transportation component, performing a systematic review, and making it more user friendly.

The next Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for November 21, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### **Comp Plan Case Study Focus Groups**

Planning Commission staff Kelly Walker updated the commission on her progress in coordinating the Comp Plan Case Study Focus Groups to be held respectively on: 11/6, West Seattle; 11/7 Belltown; 11/12, Rainier Beach; 11/13, Greenwood Phinney-Ridge; and 11/14, 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Marty Curry indicated that she would be contacting commissioners in the next week to schedule their selective participation in one or more of the focus groups.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Owen at 9:00 a.m.

## **NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, 14 November 2002

3:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Municipal Building, Room 221

*Copies of the Planning Commission Minutes are available by calling 684-0433.*



**SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
November 14, 2002  
Approved January 9, 2003**

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Denise Lathrop, Vice Chair, Anjali Bhagat, George Blomberg, Angela Brooks, Grace Chien, Gregory Davis, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Lyn Krizanich, Mimi Sheridan, Val Thomas, Paul Tomita

**Commissioners Absent:** John Owen, Steve Sheehy, Darryl Smith, Linda Stalzer

**Staff:** Marty Curry, Executive Director; Kelly Walker, Staff

**Visitors:** Tom Hauger, Lish Whitson, DCLU; Charlotte Moss

Vice-Chair Denise Lathrop opened the meeting at 3:10 p.m., noting that Chair John Owen was unable to attend today's meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the October 24, 2002 Full Commission meeting were approved unanimously as written.

**Chair's Report**

Vice Chair Denise Lathrop reported on several issues and upcoming events. She noted that the City Council is finishing its budget deliberations, and thanked those who were able to communicate the Commission's concerns about neighborhood planning to individual Council members.

Upcoming meetings include: the SPC/SDC Joint Alaskan Way Viaduct working session, November 18 (note: this was subsequently delayed until December); SPC Transportation Committee meeting on November 21, 2002; and SPC Housing, Neighborhoods and Urban Centers Committee meeting on November 26, 2002.

**December meeting; Year End Commission Dinner**

Vice Chair Lathrop stated that the Executive Committee is proposing that the Commission year-end dinner be held in lieu of the December 12 full Commission Meeting. However, since there is need for at least a short business meeting in December, Commissioners were asked to consider a meeting attached to either the November 26 Housing, Neighborhood, Urban Center Committee meeting or the December 3<sup>rd</sup> Executive Committee meeting. Staff will poll all Commissioners early next week and set a time for the meeting. Tom Hauger will be briefing the Commission on the Comp Plan Monitoring Report [note that this meeting was subsequently scheduled for November 26].

**Commission Administration Updates**

Marty Curry reported that the hiring process for the Commission's Planning Analyst position will begin after Thanksgiving, with a goal of having a new person in the position

by January, 2003. Marty also reported that she has sent a memo to the Mayor via Alex Field, Boards and Commissions Administrator regarding reappointment of four current Commissioners and filling one vacant position. Field will be meeting with the mayor on November 15 and will discuss this issue.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### **Alaskan Way Viaduct Project**

Marty Curry reported that the Planning and Design Commissions are scheduled to have a working session with City and WSDOT staff next week. This session will focus primarily on updates on the alternatives being developed in the DEIS and an initial discussion about planning for the waterfront within the context of these alternatives.

### **South Wallingford Plan**

Vice Chair Denise Lathrop asked Marty Curry to update the Commission on the draft South Wallingford Plan – an amendment to the original Wallingford Neighborhood Plan? Marty Curry stated that the planning group is hosting a Validation meeting on November 16 and that the City and the Commission will review and provide comments on the plan between mid November and early January. City Council's Neighborhoods, Arts and Culture committee will have a briefing on the plan in mid January but will not consider the plan for adoption until after a DCLU land use code analysis has been completed (possibly by September, 2003). The Planning Commission will review the plan, using the same format as was used for the earlier neighborhood planning process. Four Commissioners are sought to be the review team. Mimi Sheridan and Val Thomas volunteered to review the plan; Marty will recruit two more Commissioners. Commissioners asked if this is an amendment to the Wallingford plan, and whether it should be validated by the entire neighborhood, not just by the south Wallingford group. Marty Curry stated that she would find out how this is being handled.

### **Elevated Transit/Monorail**

Marty Curry updated Commissioners, noting that assuming the monorail project moves forward, the City is developing plans for how it will organize to do needed planning and implementation work. This will include consideration of how the Planning Commission will be involved in various stages of the project level planning/design work and implementation.

Commissioner Paul Tomita asked what will happen if the monorail fails? Is there an alternative intermediate capacity transit strategy that the City will pursue? Commissioner Val Thomas urged the Commission to get much more critical about what happens downtown if the monorail project moves forward. He cited the need to continue to look at what alignment and design will be best for the health of downtown. Commissioner Lyn Krizanich stated her concern that the monorail project started with a technology first, then found a place to use it. The Commission should help to ensure that the City has a logical strategy in place, not driven first by technology. Vice Chair Denise Lathrop added that an important key to the monorail's success is to have a plan for multimodal transfer points so that whatever technology is used, it's connecting efficiently with other transit modes.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan expressed her interest in the more abstract concept – how is the relationship to be defined between the City and the monorail transit agency? Will the City be willing to play a critical role in the planning and design of the project? Marty Curry added that the Planning Commission should state their interest to the City Council as soon as possible. Commissioner Paul Tomita stated that if the monorail fails, all three transportation issues will have failed. If this happens, the City should take this opportunity to develop a comprehensive transportation plan — a five, ten and fifty year vision that works to solve transportation issues in the region; maybe this is what goes to the voters next. Tomita also voiced his belief that the monorail is the only economically viable way to get another 100,000 people through downtown. Commissioner Val Thomas noted that without the monorail as part of a continuous system, how it connects through downtown might be different than it is currently envisioned.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen stated that transportation systems function in non-intuitive ways and that the reality is quite different from what you may imagine. He further noted that the recent election had not illuminated much and that there's no mandate. Everything is on the table – and the City and the region could take a more structural, systematic approach to transportation. He also stated that he doesn't think we have many answers for our transportation problems. The cost and the partial solutions presented on the ballot measures worked against them.

#### **Neighborhood Planning Implementation Advisory Committee Sunset and Beyond**

Marty Curry reported on the recent presentation and discussion with the City Neighborhood Council by her, Lisa Merke and Cindy Barker on their proposals to replace the NPIAC when it sunsets at the end of 2002. There were a number of concerns raised, particularly regarding the functions of the current CNC Neighborhood Planning Committee and the fit between the policy focus of the Planning Commission and that of the CNC. After discussion with Commissioners and DON staff, the Commission's earlier proposal has been revised to focus in 2003 on identifying issues and determining staff needs and capacity. Only after these steps will a process be suggested for the Planning Commission to take on neighborhood plan related policy issues (replacing NPIAC's policy advisory role). Commissioners expressed support for this phased process given the current budget cuts in DON and other departments.

#### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: COMP PLAN CASE STUDY FOCUS GROUPS**

Marty Curry provided a brief background for Commissioners on the Planning Commission's role in coordinating and carrying out focus groups for each of the five Comp Plan Case Study neighborhoods. She thanked those Commissioners who have participated as "hosts" and observers and to Mimi Sheridan for facilitating one of the focus groups. Commissioners who had participated in the focus groups then summarized their impressions of what they heard from neighborhood participants.

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich attended the West Seattle focus group, which she described as a great group. She summarized key points they made regarding the format and findings of the draft case study for the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village. She

reported that while participants appreciated the data in the report, they found it difficult to tell if the hub urban village strategy was a success. They noted that missing were the neighborhood plan's goals, key elements and accomplishments – all of which would help to provide ways to measure the success of this planning strategy. They also recommended adding a next steps section, so that readers know where this case study fits into a larger picture of assessing the success of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan reported that the Rainier Beach focus group was very engaged; focusing on both the report and planning related issues they are dealing with in the community. Participants felt the report indicates little progress or change when in reality a lot of things are in process. They called for a deeper analysis of the demographics, especially of immigrants and their needs and influence.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop reported that the Greenwood focus group made good observations, both about ways to strengthen the case study report and its role in helping to understand the success of the Comp Plan and the Urban Village strategy. Participants noted that the characterization of the Growth Management Act as a driver for the City's Urban Village strategy needs to be defined in the introduction to the case studies to provide the appropriate context. They raised questions regarding whether growth happened because of the Urban Village strategy and what conclusions can be drawn from what has occurred. These questions get to the intent of the case study analysis and how it can best be used by the City and the community. They, too, had a number of comments regarding inaccuracies in the report.

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen stated that the neighborhood planning process lacked a set of key defining elements or measures that would allow measurement of the net effect of the Urban Village strategy. He asked how much the case studies can help to do this after the fact. He suggested that the report should reference the elements identified in the Comprehensive Plan as a framework, but not to try to make these case studies a neighborhood plan update or progress report.

Comp Plan Manager Tom Hauger stated that their vision of how the case studies can be useful includes using them as a way for citizens to reconnect their neighborhood plan with the key goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan Update that will be initiated in 2003 will be used to identify policies that are working or not. The intent of the case studies is to identify lessons that can be applied to other neighborhoods in this larger update. One question to be addressed is whether there are specific things about the Urban Village Strategy that are helping to make a difference.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop stated that an important measure is the allocation of resources and City investment in neighborhoods that are taking growth. She noted that this was acknowledged in Greenwood. Commissioner Mimi Sheridan added that it would also be important to know why developers chose to develop in urban villages (or not). Commissioner Paul Tomita stated that if we want to understand why development

happens, the City should consider a survey of people who come to the City for a MUP (Master Use Permit).

Commissioner Val Thomas pointed out the importance of forces beyond public works, particularly those that affect public safety. The University District and Broadway are examples of such areas where there are public infrastructure investments but the effect of street youth/adults has made them not feel safe.

Tom Hauger agreed and noted that it has always been a question of how much the Comprehensive Plan should drive capital budgets in the City. In recent months there are some department directors who have indicated an interest in looking at these connections more seriously.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan cautioned that the City remember that other areas in the city need investments, some of which are experiencing growth outside of urban villages. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen voiced the belief that especially with the capital budget the City should link its investments to growth. He also stated that there is an opportunity to use lean times to make investments where future growth may happen.

Commissioners thanked Tom Hauger and Lish Whitson for joining them for the discussion of the focus groups. Vice Chair Denise Lathrop and Marty Curry noted that the Commission will be compiling its notes and developing a short report with observations and recommendations by early December.

### **DISCUSSION: 2003 WORK PLAN PRIORITIES**

Marty Curry introduced the discussion of 2003 Work Plan priorities by sharing Chair John Owen's interest in beginning work now to identify priorities and match those with our staff and Commission resources. Marty invited Commissioners to begin by sharing their ideas regarding priorities for 2003. These are summarized below:

**Comprehensive Transportation Strategy:** Advocate and offer to work with SDOT in developing a comprehensive transportation strategy for the City. Commissioner Paul Tomita stated that the City needs such a strategy to provide needed direction with allocating City resources and in advocating with other transportation agencies regarding projects that affect the city's transportation capacity.

**Neighborhood Planning:** Advise on how to deal with fewer Neighborhood Development Managers. Commissioners Denise Lathrop and Mimi Sheridan identified this as an important area for the Commission to focus on with DON.

### **Planning Topics:**

- Comprehensive Plan Update
- Commercial Policies
- Industrial Policies

Several Commissioners urged that these topics clearly take precedence, in part because they are so central to creating a clear planning function.

**Transportation Policy Issues/Neighborhood Planning Policy Issues:**

Commissioner Matthew Kitchen noted the need for clarification about subarea/corridor planning in SDOT and how this relates to subarea/area-specific planning in DCLU. He expressed more interest in subarea transportation plans if they are part of a larger subarea plan. Others agreed, noting that this relationship is not clearly defined.

Commissioner Denise Lathrop observed that the City continues to do things piecemeal and doesn't look at things from a broader perspective. Commissioner Grace Chien added that the Commission should drive toward acceptance of some broader framework – a first step in linking the Comprehensive Plan more closely to capital investment decisions.

Commissioner Paul Tomita expressed frustration with the current environment in the City that seems reactive, with officials acting as caretakers, trying to stop the hemorrhaging. He voiced the need for someone who will get out front and lead. Commissioner Val Thomas agreed, noting that the recession is a big obstacle to elected officials being more visionary. But he also observed that it is still a useful function for the Commission to be advising elected officials to be more proactive. Commissioner Tomita added that the governmental recession will last longer than the private market recession. Commissioner Matthew Kitchen remarked that timing is the key issue. Finance reform needs to happen now to be prepared for when times are better. He also challenged Commissioners to think about what work they can do that will make a profound effect, stating his belief that the Commission should focus on land use policies/land use code issues in the coming year.

Commissioner Mimi Sheridan noted that citizens who have been involved in neighborhood planning are concerned about the City reneging on its commitment to implementation.

Commissioner Val Thomas stated that he wants to get back to the concept of influencing public opinion through op ed pieces and other newspaper articles. This tool might be used to introduce the need to change the commercial land use code, for example. Commissioner George Blomberg agreed, adding that educating and recruiting more people to neighborhood planning could be a place for a Planning Commission role. He sees this effort as critical to keeping new ideas and energy coming into the neighborhoods. He voiced his interest in the Commission maintaining a focus on “grassroots” activities at the neighborhood level like the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Streetscape workshop and the current focus groups. Finally, Commissioner Mimi Sheridan noted that participation of citizens is usually project based. With a reduced number of projects (due in part to cuts to the NMF), there will be less overall participation. The effect of these cuts on overall involvement of citizens in their communities could be something the Commission should monitor.

**ADJOURN:** Vice Chair Denise Lathrop adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.